

CONDITIONS OF HAPPINESS

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PREFACE

This book is about the degree to which people take pleasure in life: in short 'happiness'. It tries to identify conditions that favor a positive appreciation of life. Thus it hopes to shed more light on a longstanding and intriguing question and, possibly, to guide attempts to improve the human lot.

During the preceding decades a growing number of investigations have dealt with this issue. As a result there is now a sizable body of data. Yet it is quite difficult to make sense of it. There is a muddle of theories, concepts and indicators, and many of the findings seem to be contradictory. This book attempts to bring some order into the field.

The study draws on an inventory of empirical investigations which involved valid indicators of happiness; 245 studies are involved, which together yield some 4000 observations: for the main part correlational ones. These results are presented in full detail in the simultaneously published 'Databook of Happiness' (Veenhoven 1984). The present volume distils conclusions from that wealth of data. It tries to assess the reality value of the findings and the degree to which correlations reflect the conditions of happiness rather than the consequences of it. It then attempts to place the scattered findings in context. As such, this work is not a typical study of literature on happiness. It does not review all concepts, theories and observations ever associated with the term. In fact, it covers only a part of that field (life satisfaction) and aims

at laying a solid basis of facts rather than at the demonstration of some theory.

The book is primarily written for a scholarly audience: in particular for social scientists in the field of 'quality of life'. Considerable parts of it aim also at social scientists in other fields: especially the sections covering the consequences which 'social inequality', 'work', 'intimate networks' have on the appreciation of life and the chapters that deal with effects of 'early' experience', 'personality differences' and 'value priorities'. Philosophers may take an interest in the work insofar as it allows a look at the reality value of antique theories of happiness. I also hope that some of the conclusions will reach policy makers in one way or another: not least the conclusion that socio-economical issues are no longer the most relevant to happiness in contemporary western society.

This book is one of the products of a broader research program on happiness at the Erasmus University of Rotterdam. Funds were provided by the Department of Sociology of the University, while the Dutch Ministry of Social Affairs allotted assistance. The project was supervised by prof. dr. R. Wentholt. Though rather severe sometimes, his comments corrected my thinking on crucial points. Several people assisted in the gathering of the data. Ton Jonkers in particular did a great deal of that work. Technical advice was given by Liesbeth Nuyten and Jacques Tacq. The various drafts were typed by Jeanne Hidskes and for the major part by Elly Graven. Janet van der Does de Willebois looked over the English and Saskia Chin-Hon-Foei drew up the index.

Erasmus University Rotterdam, The Netherlands. January, 1984

Ruut Veenhoven

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

The ideal of promoting happiness is an old one. It is in fact a recurrent theme in the history of moral philosophy. The notion dates back to the Ancient Greeks - to the Epicurians in particular - and has been around ever since, albeit as the laughing stock of sceptics and as a stone of offence for various preachers of penitence. In the 18th century it obtained a firm foothold again and at the beginning of the 19th century it became predominant. The British Utilitarians proclaimed the enjoyment of life to be of the highest value. It was the touchstone for the good and the bad of all action, even of political action. It was claimed to be the duty of governments to promote the greatest happiness of the largest number of people. Though not unchallenged, this view still enjoys considerable support. It is actually one of the ideological ingredients of current western welfare states.

In seeking to promote happiness one must obviously be aware of the conditions in which it flourishes. Hence that question has been given much thought over the ages. The abundant writings on the issue fill many bookshelves. The earliest answers tended to emphasize rules of living, which often involved the renunciation of fame and wealth. Yet there were always voices that advised amelioration of living conditions; not only better support in the personal sphere of life, but also a wiser organization of society at large.

Answers of the latter kind gained strength when society began to be considered

as a man-made phenomenon and hence as something that can be altered. Many 'utopist' proposals for a happier society were presented in the 18th and 19th century and several of them inspired influential social movements. All this roused heated debates on the conditions of happiness. On the whole these debates did not result in consensus. The arguments being based on speculation and ideological presuppositions rather than on established facts; none of the parties was able to demonstrate the effectiveness of its recipes convincingly.

At one time it was expected that the emerging social sciences would save the situation. The new impartial methods for systematic observation and experimentation would bring a break-through which centuries of philosophy had failed to achieve. Several of the founding fathers voiced a hopeful note about this possibility: For instance Spencer (pioneer in both psychology and sociology) in his book 'social Statics or the Conditions Essential to Human Happiness' (1850). However, the matter in fact stopped with such declarations. With the exception of a few isolated attempts, the subject was left untouched and terms like 'happiness' and 'life satisfaction' have not been included in most behavioral science dictionaries. (For example not in Bendorf, 1969; Boer-Hoff, 1977; Lindzey & Aronson, 1969; Reading, H.T., 1977; Theodorson & Theodorson, 1969).

Yet since the 1960's a slight upsurge of interest occurred. To some extent this is a by-product of the so-called 'Social Indicator Movement'. Policy-makers in affluent western nations instigated large survey studies in order to assess the well-being of citizens and to sound out the demand for state sponsored services. Several of these marketing-like studies involved attempts to assess the appreciation of life: British studies of this kind were reported by e.g. Abrams & Hall (1973), Dutch ones by Pommer & Van Praag (1978; the so-called 'Levenssituatie Surveys') and various American studies by Bradburn (1969), Campbell (1976) and Andrews & Withey (1976). Independently some stray psychologists picked up the subjects as well; some clinical psychologists did so in the context of studying the healthy personality (Among others Wessman & Ricks, 1966). A few social psychologists became interested in the issue in the course of their work on 'social comparison'. (Among others Brickman & Campbell, 1971). Several gerontologists discovered happiness when studying the 'adjustment' to retirement and old age. (Among others Thompson et al., 1960).

This book is part of that revival. It is in fact an account of the results yielded so far. Though the promised systematic study of happiness was never produced, stray investigations on the matter provide a quite sizable body of

data. If ever it comes to the redemption of the old mission, a chart of these data will be valuable.

Why studied so little as yet?

Before going into the details of this inventory study, I must first say a few words about why the social sciences have never taken more interest in happiness. If serious objections were involved I cannot merely ignore these. There are objections indeed, though more tacit ones than outspoken scruples. I did not find any treatise on why social scientists should not study happiness, but I met with various casual remarks in that vein. Both moral and technical objections seem to be involved.

Evaluative objections. One main point is that many do not deem happiness worthwhile as a goal. Opponents of the Utilitarian theory of value argue that experiential happiness is a psychological surface phenomenon, which is at best a far cry from the 'real good' and not seldom a false one. (For example Schaar, 1970:25). The promotion of matters like 'creativity', 'freedom' and 'growth' being considered more urgent, happiness is assigned a low priority for research.

To some extent such objections are a matter of personal preference and, as such, not very suitable for discussion. As far as the ranking of values is concerned it is of course not possible to pass judgement. Thus it is not possible to decide conclusively whether or not 'creativity' should take priority over 'happiness'. However, where objections involve assumptions about the factual nature of human reality, they are open to empirical falsification. The claim that happiness is a 'psychological surface phenomenon' is one of such reality assumptions; the claim that 'mere appreciation of life is at best a far cry from real well-being' is another. At the end of this book I will consider these claims in more detail (section 9/2.4). On the basis of the available data I will then expose them as gross exaggerations and in some respects as simply false. These presuppositions against happiness provide no grounds for neglecting its study.

The same holds for the related objection that happiness is of 'no consequence': that being unhappy involves no other hurt than that and as such there would be little social reason for averting it; less reason at least than preventing a phenomenon like 'illness', which harms production and disorganizes families, or 'alienation', which undermines social cohesion. This argument again carries the moral that social scientists can spend their time better than

studying happiness. Yet once more it is based on incorrect reality assumptions. Section 9/2.4 will show that enjoyment of living is predictive of things like 'health', 'longevity' and 'social acceptance' and that the happiness of citizens has consequences at the social system level as well.

Finally there is the objection that the promotion of happiness may be at the expense of other values. Early Christian moralists rejected the Epicurian search for enjoyment because it might lead people away from the ascetic lifestyle they advocated. Likewise, modern critics of the Utilitarians argue that procuring the greatest happiness for the greatest number of people may be at the cost of widely shared values, such as 'truth' or 'growth'. (For instance Bay, 1965:58). Some warn even that it may involve the violation of human rights: the happiness of the majority could be achieved by the repression of minorities, while slavery and totalitarianism might in some socio-economic conditions appear more conducive to the common happiness than freedom and democracy. (For instance Hoffe, 1978:163). Similarly there is the theme found in science fiction that attempts to create a society where everybody is happy, end up in an assault on human dignity. Happiness-engineering is then depicted as involving mind-control and drugging; working out destructively as such, because it blinds people to reality problems. This genre also tends to portray the happiness of the greatest number as something dull and vulgar. Though not easy to check, these objections are again, in principle, open to empirical verification. Insofar as data are available they rather suggest the contrary. Currently, happiness is at least most prevalent in politically free societies (see section 6/ 1.1b), while at the individual level it is characteristic for autonomous, self-reliant and mentally mature persons (see sections 7/2.1, 7/6.1, 7/1.2 respectively). Once again, ideological stereotypes appear to be a bad guide in setting research priorities.

Scientific objections. Next to these ideological arguments, several of a more scientific nature have been raised. The most current of these is that happiness is too elusive a concept to allow serious investigation: for instance Bay (1965: 58). Schaar (1970:4) even concluded that 'logic and learning are impotent in this matter'. A look at the philosophical literature on happiness does indeed witness a discouraging confusion of tongues. Yet this is no reason for closing the subject. It should rather be an inducement to construct a workable concept. Chapter 2 will do so. It will review the variety of meanings ever associated with the term happiness and then select one from these. Happiness will be defined as 'the overall appreciation of one's life-as-a-whole'. This conception is clear-cut and it does correspond with some observable reality.

Still there is doubt whether an individual's appreciation of life can be measured validly. Several problems are mentioned: the problem that people tend to answer questions about happiness evasively; the problem that they mix up actual appreciations with trendy conceptions of the good life, the problem of self deceit, etc. These charges and several more are considered in chapter 3. It will appear that there is as yet little empirical evidence for any of them and that most can even be refuted.

One final technical argument is that the determinants of happiness are so complex that there is little prospect of ever being able to calculate the happiness consequences of political decisions in advance. (Bay, 1965:58). The problem with this argument is that it anticipates the results of the study it dissuades. It is thus no more than an educated guess, though a well considered one. One can imagine that the relation between manipulable conditions and experiential happiness is indeed complicated by all sorts of human processes (e.g. habituation, valuation and comparison). Yet we will see that their empirical exploration yielded several useful policy indications, among other things indications that the promotion of 'freedom' adds more to happiness of western people than further 'affluence'. (Section 6/1). It will also appear that the empirical study of happiness exposes various incorrect happiness recipes, which would otherwise have continued to dominate policies implicitly. (Section 9/2).

Shortcomings of earlier literature surveys.

The purpose of this book is to take stock of the results of empirical investigations on happiness. At the present stage such an inventory seems timely. Rather than new data we need a survey of the available ones, not only to forestall haphazard studies and double work, but also to acquire a basis for comparison through time and culture and so, possibly, to identify universal conditions of happiness. I found a considerable number of research reports waiting in libraries, but only a few reviews. In fact I came across nine literature surveys, only one of them longer than thirty pages. Two of these deal exclusively with happiness in elderly persons (Adams, 1971; Larson, 1978). The other seven are not restricted to special categories (Fellows, 1966; Wilson, 1967; Veenhoven, 1970; Fordyce, 1972; Robinson & Shaver, 1973; Arkoff, 1975; Nettle, 1976). All, including my own, suffer from serious imperfections. These imperfections are the rationale for the present study, so they deserve a short enumeration.

Sloppy conceptualization. Most surveys did not start from any clear conception of happiness. They tend to gather research reports on phenomena the investigator labeled as 'happiness' or the like. There being various connotations in usage, a Babel of tongues is characteristically the result. Fordyce's survey contains for instance studies on 'mood', 'life satisfaction' and 'peak experiences' (p.19). Curiously, most reviewers noted that the term 'happiness' carries different meanings, but failed to make a motivated choice. My own earlier review did start with a formal definition of happiness, but did not use it sufficiently consistently in selecting the studies.

Uncritical acceptance of indicators. Though all reviewers noted that some of the measures of happiness used were somewhat dubious, no one got around to sorting out the valid from the less valid ones. All merely reported the results, whether sound or not. Only Fordyce pointed out some doubtful indicators afterwards.

Uncritical presentation of statistics. Statistical relations were presented as valid links. With the exception of Nettler, not one of the reviewers mentioned the possibility that the correlations might be statistical artefacts, caused by e.g. selective response bias or by spuriousness. All report for instance that several investigations found a positive correlation between happiness and 'income', but fail to note that this correspondence could be due at least partly to a tendency of the rich to present themselves as happy because they are expected to be so, or to better health conditions among the rich. In the original reports one generally finds more awareness of such complications than in the reviews.

Confusion of correlates with causes. Focused as they were on the things that make for a happy life, all reviewers depicted factors that correlate with happiness as its determinants. Yet causality can work the other way around as well. The earlier mentioned correlation between happiness and 'income' can also mean that enjoyment of life adds to the chance of good earnings: for instance because it activates people and smoothes social contacts. Such effects of happiness are particularly likely to be involved in the correlations between happiness and personal characteristics. One's appreciation of life can for example influence one's 'self-esteem' and one's 'values'. In trying to identify the things that make for happiness, the heart of the problem is to disentangle cause and effect relationships. Unfortunately, this problem is not even mentioned in any of the surveys.

Incomplete coverage of investigations. The earlier surveys cover only part of the investigations that were actually available at the time they were drawn up. The most complete review is the one by Fordyce in 1972. Fordyce claims his collection to be 'exhaustive'. Yet it covers only 18 of the 59 publications I found published prior to 1970. The flow of investigations after 1970 has not yet been reviewed at all. All surveys focus heavily on research in the US and overlook the considerable number of European studies.

Incomplete report of findings. The earlier reviewers did not enumerate all the findings actually presented in the publications covered. Only Fordyce tried to present the findings completely. All the others selected the - in their view - most interesting ones. Thus they tended to omit non-correlates and factors that did not fit in their theoretical scheme. Though inevitable in the context of short review articles, this practice involves a considerable loss of information.

Little cultural relativism. In their eagerness to identify 'the' conditions of happiness, most reviewers lost sight of the context of the findings. Though some recognize that things may work out differently in one social category than in another (age, gender, social class), most failed to emphasize that conditions of happiness may vary across time and culture. Only Nettle touches on the problem. Whether universal conditions of happiness actually exist is not even discussed in any review.

The plan of this book.

The purpose of this book, for a start, is to avoid those shortcomings. Hence it begins with a careful delineation of the field. Chapter 2 will make clear that this study is about an experiential phenomenon rather than an ethical category. Happiness will be defined as the overall appreciation of one's life-as-a- whole. As such this study will not go into all the problems and mysteries ever associated with the term. Happiness having been defined, two 'component' concepts are distinguished: 'hedonic level of affect' and 'contentment'. The differences between these concepts are specified and the case of using the distinctions is argued. These happiness concepts are then compared with various similar conceptions such as 'well-being', 'morale' and 'mental health'. The chapter closes with an enumeration of currently used synonyms for the phenomenon at hand.

Next, chapter 3 discusses whether these three concepts lend themselves for operationalization. It takes stock of the objections to attempts to measure happiness. All the objections are considered and insofar as possible checked on the basis of empirical data. None of them appears insurmountable.

The contention that happiness is measurable in principle does evidently not mean that all the indicators ever used measured it validly. Hence chapter 4 holds them all up against the light. All questions, tests and observational methods are inspected for their ability to tap the phenomena defined in chapter 2. More than half is deemed unsuitable.

Having established which indicators of happiness are acceptable, I started by gathering investigations that had actually used such indicators. The laborious search procedure is reported in chapter 5. It yielded 150 publications, reporting 156 research projects covering altogether 245 different samples. These investigations took place between 1911 and 1975; 32 countries were involved. The chapter goes on to describe how this bookshelf of reports was summarized in a one-inch thick 'Databook' that is published together with this volume and that served as the basis for the following chapters. These chapters then get to the heart of the matter: the actual findings about conditions of happiness.

Chapter 6 begins with the differences in happiness between people living in different situations: in rich or in poor countries, in villages or in towns, at the top of the social ladder or at the bottom, embedded in intimate networks or alone, etc. Several strong differences in happiness come to light. All statistical differences are checked for reality value. Some stand the test, but in most cases serious doubt remains. Each difference is also checked for causality - whether it is due to effects *on* happiness or rather to effects *of* happiness. In some instances it will appear possible to establish directions of causality. Yet in most cases conclusions on this matter appear to be out of reach.

In the same vein chapter 7 tries to identify the personal characteristics that incline towards happiness. Variables reviewed are e.g. 'physical health', 'mental effectiveness', 'activity level', 'lifestyle', 'longings' and 'convictions'. Considerable differences pop up again. Each of the findings is once more considered for reality value and for direction of causality. Chapter 8 follows the same procedure for antecedents of happiness such as 'earlier confrontation with war', 'characteristics of the family of origin' and 'life goals in young adulthood'.

Finally chapter 9 makes up the balance. All findings are condensed in a

four page summary scheme (pp. 376-379). Forty-eight main variables are involved. About two-thirds of these were found statistically related to happiness in some instance. In less than half of the latter cases there is reasonable certainty that the correlated variables determined happiness to some extent. The findings are then placed in a tentative model that allows a view on their interrelations.

The last section confronts the findings with current beliefs about happiness: with beliefs about the things that typically make for a happier life as well as with wider theories about its nature and consequences. Several beliefs are exposed as myths; among others the belief that it would not be possible to augment happiness lastingly, because 'habituation' and 'rising expectations' would always nullify the effects of improvements.

Limitations of this approach

This tentative chart of conditions that favor a positive appreciation of life is only a dim reflection of the ambitions cherished by the 19th century advocates of the scientific study of happiness. Several of these looked forward to the discovery of universal laws of happiness, which would allow a deductive sketch of the contours of the good society. It was expected that empirical studies such as these would lead to the formulation of such laws.

A solid empirical basis is indeed a necessary condition for fruitful theorizing and it is not unlikely that this inventory will allow a better view on the processes underlying evaluations of life. The absence of a solid documentation of facts is actually one of the reasons why the theory of happiness is still largely at the level where the Ancient Greeks left it. Yet it would be wrong to anticipate a dramatic breakthrough. Amassing facts does not automatically result in better understanding. It is moreover not very likely that the dynamics of happiness will ever be caught in a few 'universal laws'. In my opinion we can at best get a more complete view on the various social and psychological (or even biological) processes involved, but the interactions of these will probably be too complex to disentangle and too varied to allow workable generalizations. The deductive prediction of how political decisions will affect happiness will therefore remain out of reach for the greater part, and the Utilitarian recipe for the scientific resolution of moral dilemma's will thus be unfeasible.

Yet even without fully understanding the dynamics of happiness it will go a long way by observing which elements of contemporary societies do add to the appreciation of life and which are typically detrimental to it.

However, here again one should guard against too optimistic expectations. Contrary to naive 19th century views, there is no prospect of empirical identification of 'the' optimal society. Requirements for happiness are typically variable across time and culture. Still there are probably some universal prerequisites and there is some point in trying to identify these, even if that sometimes means stating the obvious. Evident requirements for happiness are easily overlooked by zealous idealists and by those with vested interests. Impartial evidence for their existence is hence not a luxury. Moreover, not all requirements are equally obvious. Some things people badly need are not fully recognized. Empirical research on conditions of happiness can then help to focus attention and to correct misunderstanding.

This approach will appear most useful for identifying culturally specific requirements of happiness; in particular for monitoring effects of social change. This study suggests for example that 'money' and 'work' became less crucial prerequisites for happiness in western society, while 'intimate support' became increasingly indispensable. Awareness of such developments is essential for everyone who seriously wants to promote happiness. In this vein the Social Indicator Movement presented itself as a 'radar' system that was invaluable in navigating towards the good society. Yet we should be aware that this inductive radar looks back rather than ahead. Subtle social changes manifest themselves in changes in happiness only in the long run; the attitude of life being rooted firmly in rather stable beliefs and personal characteristics. Though slow to react, happiness trends nevertheless provide a valuable compass; at any rate a necessary counterpoise to preconceived notions about what is good for people.

One last thing to note is that the society that allows most enjoyment of life is not necessarily the most ideal society. Though there is little reason for assuming that the maximalization of happiness will usually be at the expense of other widely shared values, one cannot rule out the possibility that it sometimes is. Even if the study of happiness should yield useable policy indications, there is thus still the issue of whether the obtainable gains in happiness are worth the consequences.

Summary

This book attempts to identify conditions that favor a positive appreciation of life. It does so by taking stock of the results of 245 empirical studies on happiness. One goal is to provide a concise and yet complete view of the findings on happiness; in particular of the differences that appear when findings are compared across time, nations and social categories. Another goal is to assess the extent to which the correlations found represent causal relations and how these causalities interact.

Together the abundant data provide a basic map of conditions of happiness in contemporary society. Though still tentative in many respects and obviously incomplete, it provides several new insights and guidelines for further research.

Yet the crop may seem meager to impatient social reformers. A blue-print of a happier society does not emerge. Still the results do contain several useful policy indications and they allow a clean sweep of current misunderstandings on the matter.

CHAPTER 2

THE CONCEPT OF HAPPINESS

The term 'happiness' has a long history. It has figured in Western thought ever since antiquity. Over the years the term has been endowed with many different meanings. Its history is in fact characterized by a continuous debate about what it constitutes.

This confusion of tongues has not heightened the popularity of the term in scientific circles. Since the nineteenth century it has gradually fallen into disrepute. Thus several of the concepts it contained have almost disappeared from the scientific field. One such concept is 'satisfaction with life'; the issue dealt with by this study.

I will start this chapter by reviewing the *connotations* of the word happiness in common language and learned writings. (Section 2/1). On that basis I will then delineate the object of this study in more detail and provide a *formal definition* of happiness. (Section 2/2). Having defined the concept I will introduce two somewhat narrower concepts: 'hedonic level of affect' and 'contentment'. These concepts refer to major aspect appraisals, which probably serve as constituting elements in the 'overall' evaluation of life. I will refer to them as *components* of happiness; the 'affective' component and the 'cognitive' one respectively. (Section 2/3). In section 2/4 I will discuss some *adjacent concepts*; happiness will be distinguished from 'well-being', 'mental health' and 'morale'. Then in section 2/5 I will mention some *synonyms of happiness*; terms currently used to depict the phenomenon studied here.

2/1 THE VARIOUS MEANINGS OF THE WORD HAPPINESS

In common language the term 'happiness' has more than one meaning. In scientific language an even greater variety of denotations exists. Every writer on the subject tends to delineate his own definition. It would lead me too far to take stock of all the meanings ever attached to the word. Mentioning the main ones must suffice. I will begin by listing the main meanings in present day common language.

a. Happiness in common language

Current meanings of words are listed in dictionaries. Hence I consulted the Oxford Dictionary and Webster's. Together these dictionaries describe nine different meanings of the word 'happiness' in modern English. I also looked up the meanings of words similar to 'happiness' in dictionaries of some other European languages. These words also carry several meanings. To a great extent these definitions concur with the ones carried by the English word 'happiness'. See exhibit 2/1a.

Obviously not all the meanings listed there are relevant in the context of the present discussion. This book is about the appreciation of life. The denotations listed under the numbers 2, 7, 8, 9 and 10 refer to essentially different matters. This leaves us with the definitions 1, 3, 4, 5 and 6. Definition 1 refers to desirable external conditions. The definitions 3, 4 and 5 rather denote pleasant experiences the latter a more or less permanent state of pleasantness. Definition 6 seems to refer to both good conditions (perfect state) and experiential satisfaction. It also stresses permanence.

Which of these denotations is most common? Dictionaries do not tell us. Therefore several investigators asked people what they mean when they use the word. Davitz (1970) did so in the US. His report suggests that the word is most often associated with 'pleasant mood-states'. Unfortunately Davitz does not report exactly whom he interrogated nor exactly what he asked. In Denmark, Iisager (1948:242) interviewed students on the matter. Most of her respondents appeared to associate the Danish word for happiness with 'dynamic change towards better conditions'. A sizable minority reported more static connotations such as 'quiet security' and 'contentedness'. Only four percent referred to happiness as a 'peak-experience'. In the Netherlands, I myself asked university students about it. Here the more static interpretations of the word appeared most frequently: 68 percent associated the

Exhibit 2/1a

Meanings of the word happiness in six European languages

x = the word is used in this meaning in this language.

	<i>Ruut Veenhoven</i>					
	<i>English 'happiness'</i>	<i>Dutch 'geluk'</i>	<i>French 'bonheur'</i>	<i>German 'Glück'</i>	<i>Russian 'schastie'</i>	<i>Czech 'stesti'</i>
1. Good fortune, good luck, 'prosperity'. "All happiness bechance to thee", The gift of a happy chance.	x	x			x	x
2. A pleasurable experience, 'glad', 'pleased'. "Happy to meet you".	x					
3. A strong positive emotion, 'delighted' 'euphoric'. "When entering my country again after all these years I suddenly felt filled with happiness".	x	x	x		x	x
4. A passing pleasurable mood-state, 'cheerful', 'content', 'glad'. "I felt reasonably happy until he entered".	x		x		x	x
5. A rather permanent pleasant state of mind 'well-being', 'contentment', 'satisfaction'. "The happy years of childhood".	x	x	x	x		
6. A perfect, lasting state of intense satisfaction, 'felicity', 'blessedness', 'beatitude', 'bliss'. "I found happiness in the grace of God".	x	x	x	x	x	x
7. Slightly drunk, 'tipsy'. "He came in a bit happy".	x					
8. Aptness, 'appropriateness'. "A striking happiness of expression". "A happy solution to the problems".	x	x	x	x		
9. Dazed, over enthusiastic. "Trigger-happy soldiers", "Publicity-happy politicians".	x					
10. A very lucky chance. "What a piece of luck", "by chance".		x		x	x	x

word 'geluk' with a fairly continuous state of contentment. Only 12 percent said they used the term primarily for more temporary feelings of zest. Schagen (1970 :38) also concluded that the Dutch word for happiness does not refer to exclusively emotional matters. This all indicates that there is not one clear dominant meaning of the word happiness in common language.

b. Happiness in philosophical language

According to Tatarkiewicz (1975:IV) the ancient Greeks were acquainted with four concepts which have later been embodied in the scientific use of the word 'happiness'. First, good fortune' (εὐτυχία, a pre-philosophic term), second, 'supreme joy of bliss' (μακαρίστης in mythology and later in philosophy) third, general 'satisfaction with life' (εὐεστῶ in Democritus) and fourth, 'possession of supreme goods' (εὐδαιμονία, Aristotle). The last two concepts are the most important ones. They represent essentially different notions. Democritus referred to the individual's appreciation of his own life. The concept of 'eudaemonia' on the other hand rather depicts a quality of life in itself. It refers to 'the good life': the best possible way to live. Though Aristotle is not too clear, some of his exegetes believe he meant 'living in accordance with man's true (innate) needs', which involves both favorable external conditions and an appropriate choice of goals. (See Barrow 1980: 16/18). Like Aristotle many philosophers depicted this state of being as the ultimate goal of the human life.

In ancient Greece discussions on happiness centered largely on the concept of eudaemonia. In that context a current question was for example on whether men really need 'wealth' and whether the desire for 'fame' is a genuine need or a false one. Like Aristotle himself most classical thinkers stressed the virtue of the contemplative life. Later Christian philosophers embroidered on this theme. They also referred to a way of living rather than to experiential satisfaction. Satisfaction was not seen to be the raw material of happiness; it was considered its consequence. The distinctive feature of their philosophy was that only one way of life can give durable satisfaction - the religious life, all other things being too fleeting and insignificant. Tatarkiewicz writes that this idea of happiness persisted virtually unchanged throughout the middle ages and long afterwards. The chief philosophers of the 17th century still thought of happiness as some perfect state of being (p. 33).

In modern times the term happiness has been given a more experiential

coloring. In the 18th century philosophers radically redefined it as the sum of pleasures, e.g. Baldwin, Locke and later Bentham (Tatarkiewicz, p. 34). Criteria of virtue and appropriateness no longer mattered. As long as man is contented he is happy. This use of the word has never been fully accepted, however. There have always been scholars who were reluctant to call somebody happy for the sole reason that he apparently enjoys life. Many require that those are 'good reasons' for him to do so: that the enjoyment stems from an 'adequate' assessment of his life-conditions and from 'healthy' preferences.

Exhibit 2/c **Some recent definitions of happiness**

Beusekom, 1973:109	"Happiness is the satisfaction experienced in the relations with one's (social) environment".
Cassel, 1954:79	Happiness is a rather pleasant state involving "goal-setting and goal-striving with ego involvement on the part of the individual".
Chekola, 1974:202	Happiness is ". realizing of a lifeplan and the absence of seriously felt dissatisfaction and an attitude of being displeased with or disliking one's life".
Fordyce, 1972:227	"Happiness is a particular emotion. It is an overall evaluation made by the individual in accounting all his pleasant and unpleasant affective experiences in the recent past".
Goldings, 1954:31	"Happiness may be considered as a zone on a continuum of hedonic affect which embraces feelings of elation, contentment, satisfaction and pleasure at the positive pole, and feelings of depression, discontent and unpleasure at the negative pole".
Gumpert, 1951:2	Happiness is a rather permanent pleasant "state of mind which is caused by the release of tension".
Hart, 1940:183	"Happiness is any state of consciousness which the person seeks to maintain or attain".
Hartman, 1934:202	"A relative permanent state of well-being characterized by dominantly agreeable emotions ranging in value from mere contentment to positive felicity".

Exhibit 2/1c, continued

Hutschnecker, 1964	Happiness is the purposeful release of energy towards a meaningful goal. Its reverse is inhibition.
McNaughton, 1953:172	Happiness is taken to mean "a preference for a moment of experience for its own sake".
NSS, 1970:200	"A happy person is someone who is sufficiently integrated (passions, conscience, ego-functions) and who has realized his potentialities reasonably well". (Summary definition on the basis of statements by various Dutch scientists)
Rümke, 1923:41	Happiness is an experience which is characterized as 'happiness' by the subject which fills his experience entirely and which is regarded by him as one of the highest experiences possible.
Schulz-Hageleit, 1979:12	"Glück ist: Ungeteilt sein, Erfüllung, Erweiterung". (Happiness is integration (of identity), fulfillment (of needs) and extension (contrary to alienation).
Tatarkiewicz, 1975:16	"Happiness is a lasting, complete and justified satisfaction with life".
Wessman & Ricks, 1966:240/41	"Happiness appears as an overall evaluation of the quality of the individual's own experience in the conduct of his vital affairs. As such happiness represents a conception abstracted from the flux of affective life indicating a decided balance or positive affectivity over long periods of time".

c. Happiness in the language of the modern social science

Now a glimpse at the denotations of the term in present day language of empirical scientists. Today the word happiness is not often associated with 'virtue' in an ethical sense or with a metaphysical 'goal of life'. Currently the word usually refers to a pleasurable condition, marked by satisfaction with life-as-a-whole. Within that general idea several subtly differing definitions have been proposed. Some of these are listed in exhibit 2/1c. I will now analyze their main differences. In doing so I will present the choices involved in my own definition, which will be given in the next paragraph.

Condition vs experience. The first main difference is between definitions that stress some given quality of life and definitions that focus on the individual's enjoyment of living. This difference was already noticed to exist between Aristotle and Democritus. I will refer to them as the 'object' view on happiness and the 'subject' view respectively. 'Object' definitions refer to fixed and generally applicable standards of the good life. Any judge can in principle assess whether an individual's life meets these standards or not. On the other hand 'subject' definitions stress an experiential phenomenon; an essentially subject-bound appreciation. These appreciations may draw on given standards of the good life, but they not necessarily do so.

The 'object' view is most clearly reflected in the definitions of Hutschnecker, NSS and Schulz-Hageleit. The definitions of Fordyce and Goldings are clearly experiential. Several authors embody both 'object' and 'subject' elements in their definitions: e.g. Cassel, Chekola and Tatarkiewicz. Tatarkiewicz is the most explicit: he starts from the contention that common sense equates happiness with experiential satisfaction, but he adds that it must concern *justified* satisfaction. In his opinion "A condition which we find repugnant cannot constitute happiness. The notion above all else implies something desirable" (p.13).

Should I make a choice on this issue? I think I must. By embodying both these elements in the definition one no doubt stays closer to current connotations, but one thereby retains the traditional hybridity of the concept. This hybridity is one of the reasons why so little advance has been made in the study of happiness. Consequently this study would probably get no further than repeating the old and unsolvable problems. That's why I have opted for a narrower concept. Like Democritus and the Utilitarians I opted for the experiential part of the happiness idea. I have chosen the 'subject' part rather than the 'object' one for the following reasons:

First of all I am simply most interested in this aspect. I started this study because I was struck by the fact that people living in seemingly identical conditions can differ so much in their enjoyment of life.

The second reason is a negative one. The problem of 'object' happiness is discouragingly complex. Centuries of philosophical enquiry have failed to result in agreement about what the 'good life' is. Nor have modern behavioral scientists been able to master this value-laden problem. Psychologists do not fully agree on the criteria for 'psychological health' nor is there unanimity among sociologists on the requirements involved in a 'liveable society'. It is not very likely that definite answers will ever be found. I will do better

therefore not to focus exclusively on this problem. However, it is clear that I cannot wholly evade it either. The given conditions are among the determinants of appreciation by individuals.

The third reason to focus on the experiential denotation is that definitions of happiness working with fixed conditions are either rather empty or embody an a priori theory of the good life. The problem of emptiness appears most clearly in the earlier mentioned concept of 'eudaemonia'. As noted, that concept refers to a desirable condition or way of life. It does not specify these conditions, nor does it state by whom these conditions are to be judged. Thus the concept is just as empty as concepts such as 'well-being', 'health' and 'psychological adaptation'. The problem of a priori theories is demonstrated in the definition of Schulz-Hageleit. As can be seen in the exhibit this author defines happiness by three criteria: 'integration' of identity, 'fulfillment' of needs and 'extension' as contrasted to alienation. This definition is far from empty, but it is rather arbitrary. It is an incidental choice out of a wealth of conditions currently considered desirable. It neatly reflects a modern philosophy of life, in that it mentions mainly psychological matters and does not mention 'God' or 'virtue'. Such definitions are prescriptive rather than descriptive. They reflect the investigator's ideas on what a life ought to be, rather than how people actually appreciate their life. As such they are an obstacle rather than an aid in dealing with the question at hand here.

A final reason for focusing on the experiential part of the happiness idea is that it lends itself better to empirical enquiry. 'Object' happiness notions are either impossible to assess empirically (the 'empty' concepts) or they can be measured only very difficultly (e.g. where a priori theory equate happiness with 'freedom' or 'non-alienation'). The measurement of experiential happiness does not labor under these difficulties. We can always ask people how they feel. So, at least some questions of fact can be established: i.e. whether people are generally happy or not, and the conditions in which happiness is most frequent.

Description vs explanation. When focusing on the experiential definitions, another difference appears. Experiential happiness is defined in two ways: by the description of essential characteristics of a state of mind, or by enumeration of conditions in which a state called 'happiness' characteristically arises. The former type of definition is usually called 'descriptive', the latter 'explanatory'. Most definitions in the exhibit are of the describing type. Gumpert's definition has an explaining element. In his definition happiness is a state

of mind which is "caused by the release of tension". Likewise happiness is sometimes defined as the emotion one becomes aware of in the process of 'self actualization' or as the experience which goes together with 'virtuous activity'.

Explanatory definitions are not unusual. 'Electricity' for example is sometimes defined as the phenomenon which occurs when a conductor is moved transversely through the magnetic field. Such explanatory definitions have three disadvantages. Firstly, they tend to confuse 'what' and 'why'; secondly they work only when the phenomenon concerned can be characterized by one clear cause and thirdly, they are very close to the 'object' definitions discussed above. In fact, they are almost identical to these latter definitions. At first sight they focus on experience, but actually they define this experience in terms of external conditions. All this leads me to prefer a 'descriptive' definition of happiness.

Affective experience vs cognitive construct. A further difference is between 'affect' and 'cognition'. Happiness is being described as an affect which just happens to us, but also as a detached assessment of the quality of life. Several definitions in the exhibit stress the affective side: see the definitions of Fordyce, Goldings, Hartman and Rümke. In fact Rümke sticks most closely to an affective concept. He writes about pathological states of elation in mental patients who are sometimes not at all satisfied with their lot. On the other hand, happiness is also depicted as a rational calculation. The definition of Wessman & Ricks characterizes happiness as a product of thinking. It describes happiness as a 'conception'. Similar definitions were advanced by authors who use the term 'happiness' interchangeably with 'life-satisfaction'; Lemon et al. (1972:513).

This time I will not opt for one of these alternatives. In reality, cognition and affect are mostly highly interwoven. Hence I think it wise to conceive happiness as an attitude with both affective and cognitive components. This view will be presented in more detail in the following section.

Overall satisfaction vs satisfaction of a special kind. Then there are differences in specificity. Most definitions refer to 'satisfaction', 'elation' or 'pleasure' in general - see the definitions of Chekola, Fordyce, Goldings, Gumpert and Hartman. Van Beusekom on the other hand, is more specific. This author in fact reserves the term happiness for 'social satisfaction'. Likewise, Cassel seems to have a special kind of pleasantness in mind. His definition focuses on the awareness of 'getting, ahead'. In poetry and fiction the term happiness

is used for even more specific experiences. Poets pronounced numerous detailed descriptions of what happiness feels like. They characterized happiness as the oceanic experience of unity with nature, as the awareness of being able to cope with any problem that arises and as a Nirwana of peaceful understanding. Phenomenologically oriented psychologists suggested similar definitions of happiness. See Rossi (1926), Van Kerken (1952) and Strasser (1954).

There are at least three objections to such highly specific definitions. Firstly they characterize a unique individual experience, rather than providing a generally applicable notion. Secondly, they represent a quite arbitrary choice. Why should the experience of 'fullness' deserve the name happiness and not the experience of 'getting ahead'? Why feelings of active 'zest' rather than passive 'contentment'? Not only are those choices arbitrary, they also contain an element of suggestion. Calling these specific experiences 'happiness' suggests that they are more important than other ones; either more dominant in human experience or more valuable ethically. In the third place these definitions are too far away from what is commonly understood as happiness. All this made me decide to adhere to the notion of happiness as 'overall' satisfaction.

Peak experience vs everyday feelings. Among the definitions in the exhibit Rümke's refers to intense experiences. Poets tend to use the word in a similar sense. They usually describe happiness as a 'peak-experience'. However, most current scientific definitions refer to more continuous and latent states of mind. See Fordyce, Goldings and Wessman & Ricks. These latter conceptions are more appropriate to the question I want to answer than the former. The question at stake in chapter 1 was not how to provide people with passing emotional thrills, but how to organize society in such a way that fewer of them are enduringly dissatisfied with their life.

A related question is whether the word happiness should be used to refer to 'optimal' satisfaction or whether it should describe the 'degree' of satisfaction. As can be seen in exhibit 2/1c Tatarkiewicz opted for the former approach. He speaks of 'complete' satisfaction. Goldings is less extreme. He uses the term for the positive zone of the hedonic continuum. I myself will speak of happiness as admitting of degrees, the degree to which one characterizes one's life positively rather than negatively.

Tasting the moment vs appreciating life-as-a-whole. Finally there is the difference between passing experience of pleasure and more continuous states of awareness. Among the definitions in the exhibit Rümke's and McNaughton's

clearly refer to the former, while the latter is chosen by Fordyce, Tatarkiewicz and Wessman & Ricks. Again I opt for the latter. I do so because I feel it more urgent to understand why people differ consistently in their enjoyment of life than finding out why some people feel sometimes better than others.

2/2 HAPPINESS DEFINED

Henceforth I will speak about 'happiness' when a person has made up his mind about his own life. Happiness is then: *the degree to which an individual judges the overall quality of his life-as-a-whole favorably*. In other words: how well he likes the life he leads. The key words in this definition must be elucidated as follows:

Degree. I do not use the word happiness to denote an optimal appreciation of life. In my language it depicts a degree; like the concepts as 'length' or 'weight' it denotes more or less of something. When I say a person *is* happy, I mean he/she judges his or her life favorably rather than unfavorably.

Individual. I use the term happiness to describe the state of an individual person only. The term does not apply to collectivities, objects or events. So a nation cannot be said to be happy. At best, most of its citizens consider themselves happy. Happiness denotes a subjective appreciation of life by an individual. So there is no fixed standard for happiness. While a person who thinks he has a heart condition may or may not have one, a person who thinks he is (un)happy really *is* (un)happy.

Judges. I use the word 'happiness' where someone made an overall judgement about the quality of his life. This implies an intellectual activity. Making an overall judgement implies assessing past experiences and estimating future ones. Both require marshalling facts into a convenient number of cognitive categories. It also requires awarding relative values and setting priorities. Thus happiness is not a simple sum of pleasures, but rather a cognitive construction which the individual puts together from his various experiences.

One consequence of this conceptualization is that the word 'happiness' cannot be used for those who did not make up their mind. One cannot say whether a person is happy or not if he is intellectually unable to construct an overall judgement. Thus the concept cannot be used for animals, little children

and mentally retarded people. Similarly it does not apply to people who simply never thought about the matter.

Overall. The evaluation of life aimed at is an overall judgement. It embodies all criteria for appreciation which figure in the mind. Ancient hedonists used to equate happiness with sensory pleasures only. However, there are more modes of appreciation. Apart from the sensory system, affect and cognition enable men to appreciate life as well; insofar as judgements are made intellectually, they may be based on various values or preferences.

When I use the word 'happiness' I refer to a judgement which integrates all the appreciation criteria used explicitly or implicitly by the person who draws up the balance sheet. Thus the contention that one has 'all one ever desired' does not necessarily make a person happy. Despite all earthly endowments he may suffer pain or feel depressed. Similarly the awareness that life is 'exciting' does not necessarily mark it as happy either. At the same time life may fail to meet his criterion of meaningfulness. The overall evaluation can then be negative rather than positive.

Life-as-a-whole. I do not use the word happiness to characterize specific aspects of life. 'Happiness' refers to life-as-a-whole. Thus it covers past, present and anticipated experiences. This does not mean that all things ever experienced are given equal weight in the evaluation process. As stated above, evaluation involves sifting and ordering. In this process some experiences may be emphasized and others ignored. Past life-experiences for example seldom enter into the evaluation process in their original phenomenological Gestalt. What is taken into consideration is mostly a shallow representation of what one tasted previously.

Own life. The term happiness concerns the evaluation of one's own life. Not of life in general. A pessimistic 'Weltanschauung' does not necessarily characterize someone as 'unhappy'.

Favorably. Evaluations always embody an appreciation; a conclusion as to whether one likes something or not. Where I use the term happiness I refer to judgements concerning this aspect only. Happiness judgements concern the dimension extending from appreciation to depreciation; from like to dislike. All humans are capable of appraisals of this kind. People of all cultures are acquainted with evaluations in terms of good versus bad (Osgood, 1971: 37/38), and all persons seem able to communicate appreciation by means of facial expression. (See Schlosberg, 1954).

This criterion of 'favorableness' is very close to what is called 'pleasantness'. However, it is not quite the same. The term 'favorableness' concerns the appreciation involved in a cognitive evaluation. On the other hand the term 'pleasantness' refers exclusively to direct affective experience. As such it is more characteristic of the affective dimension of happiness than of overall happiness itself.

Thus defined, happiness appears as an *attitude towards one's own life*. Like all attitudes it involves a personal appreciation of some aspect of reality. The reality aspect involved is one's own life. We will see that happiness judgements have indeed several features which are characteristic for most attitudes. We will see that they tend to be fairly stable through time and are often not affected by minor environmental changes. (To be shown in the sections 3/1.2 and 8/1.2a). It will also appear that the problems involved in measuring happiness are in fact characteristic for the measurement of most other attitudes as well. (To be discussed in chapter 3).

d. Variable aspects.

Like all attitudes happiness judgements can differ in various respects. They can be simplistic or elaborate, clear or vague, deeply entrenched in other attitudes and beliefs or superficial, etc. For the sake of clarity, five variable aspects deserve to be mentioned especially.

Stability. Longitudinal investigations showed that people tend to stick to their happiness judgements once formed. (To be cited in section 3/1c). However, happiness judgements are not necessarily stable through time. Sometimes people change their mind quite drastically. The concept of happiness still applies to these people. If a person calls himself happy one day and claims to be unhappy the day after, then he is unhappy at the second day; whether he had good reasons for his change or not. Thus not all happiness judgements are equally stable.

Definiteness. When people cannot decide on whether to judge their life favorably or not, they cannot be said to be either happy or unhappy. Once they do make a judgement, the concept of happiness applies; even if that judgement is a very provisional one. Happiness judgements can thus vary in definiteness.

Time-emphasis. Happiness is an evaluation of 'life-as-a-whole'. Therefore the

judgement may cover not only the present, but may also draw on the past or anticipate the future. People differ in the relative weights they attach to these temporal dimensions. Some focus mainly on their past, some live by the day and others orient themselves on the future. Similarly some may base their evaluations on experiences extending far in time, while others focus on the present.

Consciousness. By definition happiness is a state of consciousness. It is a judgement figuring in the mind. However, not all states of consciousness are equally assessable. The human mind is able to 'repress' information it has in store or to distort it. Thus people who judge themselves as unhappy may be reluctant to take full cognizance of the fact. They may even try to console themselves by making themselves believe that they are quite contented. Such defensive manoeuvres do not represent what I call happiness here. In this study happiness will denote what the person 'really' believes.

Appropriateness. When a person 'really' judges his life as favorable, his evaluation may be 'inappropriate' from some points of view. For example, there is reason to doubt the appropriateness of happiness in the face of war and there is reason to raise an eyebrow when a junkie honestly says he is a happy man. However the present concept of happiness does not require that the judgement is 'justified' in any sense. The degree to which the subjective evaluation fits with given standards of the good life is hence a variable aspect of happiness. When speaking of happiness in this sense there may thus be truth in the saying that 'it is better to be an unhappy Socrates than a happy pig'.

2/3 COMPONENTS OF HAPPINESS

When evaluating the favorableness of their lives, people tend to use two more or less distinct sources of information: their affects and their thoughts. These two approaches may result in different judgements of life-as-a-whole. An individual can acknowledge that he 'feels fine' most of the time and he can also conclude that life does in fact bring him 'all he wants'. These appraisals do not necessarily coincide. A person may feel fine generally, but nevertheless be aware that he failed to realize his aspirations. Or he may have surpassed his aspirations but nevertheless feel miserable. Using the word 'happiness' in both cases would result in two different kinds. Therefore the

two aspect-judgements can best be conceived as separate issues. I will label them '*hedonic level of affect*' and '*contentment*' respectively. As they represent major elements in the overall judgement I will refer to them as 'components' of happiness. Where these appraisals are integrated in one final judgement I will speak about 'overall happiness'. Let's now first consider these components in more detail and then discuss the use of the distinctions.

a. Hedonic level of affect

Hedonic level of affect is *the degree to which the various affects a person experiences are pleasant in character*. Hedonic level of affect is not the same as 'mood'. People experience different kinds of moods: elated moods, calm moods, restless moods, moody moods, etc. Each of these moods is characterized by a special mixture of affectional experiences, one of which is 'hedonic tone' or 'pleasantness'. The concept of hedonic level concerns only the pleasantness experienced in affects; the pleasantness in feelings, in emotions, as well as in moods. So a high hedonic level may be based on strong but passing emotions of love as well as on moods of steady calmness.

Hedonic tone is an experiential quality that exists in all human affects. Several investigators have shown this to be so. (Arnold, 1960:38, Davitz, 1970:256; Schlosberg, 1954; Plutchnik, 1980:75/77 and Sjoberg et al., 1979). It exists even in brain-injured patients, who have lost their abstract capacity and therefore cannot make up a balance of their life (Goldstein, 1951:370). Probably animals do experience hedonic tone as well. As we cannot ask them we will never know for sure, however.

The average hedonic level of affect of a person can be assessed over different periods of time: an hour, a week, a year, as well as over a lifetime. The concept does not presume subjective awareness of this level. A baby that is laughing all day probably feels fine. However, it is not likely to be aware of that. Contrary to the concepts of 'happiness' and 'contentment' the concept of 'hedonic level' does not cover anticipated experience.

Hedonic level is probably a constituting factor in the overall evaluation of life called 'happiness'. However, it is not what is usually referred to as the 'affective aspect' of an attitude. The affective aspect of an attitude is the whole of emotional associations which go together with the cognitive appraisal of the object at hand. In the case of happiness it denotes the affective reaction on the awareness of being either happy or unhappy. The concept of hedonic level is broader. It covers all affective experience, among which all

the 'raw' experiences that exist more or less independently of cognitive appraisals.

b. Contentment

Contentment is the degree to which an individual perceives that his aspirations are being met. Michalos (1980:404) calls it the 'goal-achievement gap'. The concept presupposes that the individual developed conscious wants and that he formed an idea about their realization. Whether this idea is factually correct or not is unimportant. The concept concerns the individual's perception.

When an individual assesses the degree to which his wants are met, he may look both backwards and forwards. He may assess what life brought up to now and he may estimate what it is likely to yield in the future. Usually assessments cover both the past and the future.

Like hedonic level, contentment serves probably as a formative element in the overall evaluation of life. Yet it is not precisely what is commonly understood as 'the cognitive aspect' of that attitude. The cognitive aspect of an attitude is all one knows about the object concerned; the perception of success in aspirations is only part of the knowledge about one's life.

c. Differences between these components

These two components of happiness differ in several respects: I will list the main ones:

Thinking vs feeling: The concept of 'contentment' requires at least a minimum of self-reflection. It applies only when a person more or less knows what he wants and assessed the degree to which his wants are met. The concept of hedonic level on the other hand does not require any real thinking activity. All it requires is the distinction between pleasant and unpleasant affective experience. This is an innate and largely automatic activity. Even an infant distinguishes pleasure from pain, although it is incapable to reflect on it.

Voluntary vs involuntary. Contentment is the result of more or less deliberate intellectual activity: the setting of aspirations and the inspection of their realization. Hence one can try not to experience it. Mystics sometimes do so

by renouncing all wants and by focusing thought on higher matters. Hedonic tone can less easily be kept away from consciousness. Whether we want to or not, we continuously experience affects. Affects are built-in signals which cannot simply be turned off. At best one can try to suppress them. As all people experience affects and all affects embody a hedonic tone, all people can be characterized for average hedonic level.

A self-made construction vs uncontrollable gift. Making estimates of the degree to which one's demands are satisfied is an activity that is more or less in one's own hands; to some extent one can devise one's own standards and there is also some freedom in evaluating success. Affects are more mysterious. We do not know how hedonic experience is regulated. We can only register it. Unlike contentment we cannot simply manipulate it by trying harder or by lowering standards. It is less clearly related to objects and events. As such, the saying 'happiness is a gift' is most applicable for its affective component.

d. Why distinguish between those components?

Thinking of happiness as a kind of 'trinity' can clarify the issue in several respects. It helps to clear up several discussions about the conceptualization of happiness and about its measurement. Moreover it enables a better understanding of the dynamics of happiness.

Conceptualization. Let me first demonstrate that this conception can clarify some problems about the nature of happiness. One such problem is the inconclusive debate as to whether happiness is a 'rational' or an 'emotional' phenomenon. This issue figures since long in discussions on happiness and it gave rise to many half-hearted solutions. Fordyce (1972:227) for example explicitly defines happiness as an 'emotion', but in fact deals with an attitudinal phenomenon. On the other hand Chekola (1974) does his best to present happiness as the rational 'realization of a lifeplan', but cannot escape adding that 'satisfaction' must be experienced. The present conceptualization recognizes that there are reasons for distinguishing 'affective' experiences from more 'rational' appraisals, but it does not fall into an either/or choice. Instead it makes clear that 'overall happiness' is a judgement which embraces information from both sources.

A related discussion concerns the difference between 'happiness' and 'contentment'. Some authors see happiness and contentment as essentially

identical, while others claim that there must be a difference between 'full' happiness and 'mere' contentment. It has apparently been difficult to word that difference. See Barrow (1980:78-80) and Margolis (1975). The proposed distinctions present the difference clearly. Overall happiness is more than mere contentment, because it also covers generalized affect.

Yet another discussion concerns the question whether happiness can be characterized as the 'sum of pleasures'. Here the distinction between 'overall happiness' and 'hedonic level' is a good help. The latter concept corresponds to what is usually understood as 'the sum of pleasures' and in contrast the former can now be seen to imply a broader view. Overall happiness involves more than merely hedonic level.

Lastly there is the discussion as to whether artificially induced states of pleasantness can be considered to represent 'happiness'; the question of whether drugs, such as heroin, anti-depressives or 'soma' (in Huxley's fictual 'Brave New World'), provide full happiness or only an inferior substitute. Here the proposed distinctions make it clear that such drugs can at best heighten hedonic level, but are unlikely to affect the more cognitive evaluations of life; at least not enduringly. Though artificially induced hedonic level is not necessarily an inferior kind, it clearly is not the same as 'overall' happiness.

Measurement. The distinction between 'overall happiness', 'hedonic level' and 'contentment' can also clarify the current discussion about 'cognition' and 'affect' in empirical measures of happiness. This discussion started when Bradburn & Caplovitz (1965) introduced two different happiness measures: a simple self-rating and the so-called Affect-Balance-Scale (ABS), which indicates the degree to which last week's positive experiences outweigh negative ones. These measures were both supposed to represent something like 'psychological well-being', but in fact they appeared to represent somewhat different phenomena. Intercorrelation was low, and correlations with several other factors somewhat different. Hence the question was raised as to what aspects of happiness these measures tap. In response to this question McKennel (1978) and Andrews & McKennel (1980) suggested that there are two aspects of happiness: an 'affective' and a 'cognitive' one. They assumed that the Affect Balance Scale indicates the former phenomenon. The latter phenomenon was considered to be represented by the variance in happiness measures that is not explained by ABS scores. On the basis of this assumption they could assess the 'affectivity' of various quality of life measures and could get a closer look at the way typically 'affective' and primarily 'cognitive'

judgements of well-being relate to other factors. Unfortunately these efforts have not resulted in formal definitions of these components. Hence it remains unclear what all this implies.

Beiser (1974) also distinguished aspects of happiness. By means of a factor analysis he isolated two affective components (the positive and negative affects embodied in the ABS) and a factor he rather haphazardly called 'Long Term Satisfaction'. The items in this factor are quite close to my concept of 'contentment'. Unfortunately Beiser does not draw clear conceptual consequences from his findings either.

Finally Brenner (1975) demonstrated that there is an important 'quality of affect' component in happiness judgements. He explicitly defines this phenomenon and on the basis of this definition proposes measures which differ somewhat from the ABS. His conception is identical with my notion of hedonic level. Though in earlier work (Brenner, 1967) he used the concept 'satisfaction of wants', Brenner does not go on to propose a happiness component of this kind.

These are the main thoughts and findings. The proposed conceptualization can add the following three points: First it gives a more specific meaning to the terms 'affective component' and 'cognitive component'. It provides formal definitions for otherwise ambiguous statistical constructs. Secondly it suggests that happiness does not simply fall into two components, but that there remains an indivisible element: the 'overall' judgement which embodies both aspect appraisals. The phenomenon Andrews & McKennel refer to as the 'cognitive component' of happiness (the variance in self-ratings after ABS has been checked) covers in fact both 'contentment' and that 'overall' judgement. Though these are both cognitive phenomena, they are essentially different ones. Finally the formal definitions of both overall happiness and its 'components' provide a sound basis for operationalization. Instead of speculating about the various potential concepts embodied in measures, we can now draw up measures on the basis of concepts.

A further thing to note in this context is that the proposed conceptualization will appear to be a suitable tool for bringing order into the chaotic variety of happiness indicators. It provides clear criteria to distinguish valid indicators from invalid ones and it allows a global classification. Its usefulness for these purpose will be demonstrated in chapter 4.

Explanation. The view that happiness embraces both an affective and a cognitive component can also be of help in understanding its dynamics. It suggests

three roads of investigation, each leading to different fields of existing knowledge.

Firstly, the idea of 'hedonic level' instigates research into determinants of pleasantness of experience. This search leads for example into the complex field of motivation and emotion. Secondly, the notion of 'contentment' focuses the attention on aspirations and life goals and on evaluation of success with respect to these matters. As such it leads for instance into the field of (social) comparison. Thirdly the notion of 'overall' happiness gives rise to questions about weighting processes and about consolidation of judgements in stable dispositions. Thereby we enter the field of attitude formation.

The view of happiness as embracing both an affective and a cognitive component is especially useful when dealing with some particular questions. For example the old question of whether the pursuit of happiness is pointless or not. Several authors claimed that seeking happiness is like running around in a mouse-wheel. In their view every improvement in life is followed by a raise in standards of comparison, thus leaving the individual at essentially the same level of happiness. Though this theory is generally respected, it is seldom followed. Most people hope to improve their happiness nevertheless. The present conception helps to clarify what is wrong with this theory. If it applies at all, it probably applies to the cognitive component of happiness only. Contentment is indeed likely to be largely dependent on shifting standards of comparison: for instance on whether one is better off than one's neighbors. Hedonic level is less dependent on relative success. In spite of apparent advantages over their neighbors, people will still experience negative affects when some minimum demands for bio-psychical functioning are not sufficiently met: for example when they are deprived of food, when they lack sufficient sensory stimulation or when their social environment does not provide enough cues for positive identification. Such demands are absolute rather than relative. This matter will be discussed in more detail in section 9/2.3.

e. Why maintain the cover-concept of overall happiness?

The two 'components' of happiness were introduced because the concept of happiness itself is too broad for several purposes and too complex to permit a straightforward understanding of its variations. Why then maintain the cover-concept of 'overall' happiness? I do so because the 'overall' judgement

is not fully implied in its components. When somebody is generally discontented and usually feels depressed, it is not difficult to predict that he will perceive himself to be unhappy. When a person is rather discontented but frequently feels great nevertheless, his overall happiness can be predicted less easily. Then other matters come into play: e.g. the priorities he attaches to these aspects of experience and his tendency to see things positively. The same applies to the case when a person has all he wants but nevertheless feels miserable.

A further pragmatic reason is that the great majority of investigators worked with indicators of overall happiness.

f. What is new in this conceptualization?

The foregoing remarks made it clear that I am not the first person to distinguish between 'affective' and 'cognitive' aspects in happiness judgements. Yet there are some subtle but important differences between my view and earlier thinking. Firstly the notion of 'overall happiness' covers both affect and cognition. I refrained from an 'either/or' choice. Secondly I did not merely split happiness into two parts. In my thinking the distinct phenomenon of 'overall' happiness remains. Thirdly, the two aspect evaluations are now presented as separate concepts. This allows a better recognition of their nature and of their role in happiness judgements. Fourthly, the weights the two dimensions carry in the overall evaluation are now explicitly conceived as variable. This suggests that there is no sense in seeking a fixed proportion of affect and cognition in happiness judgements.

2/4 ADJACENT CONCEPTS

Another way of clarifying my concept of happiness is to contrast it with some adjacent conceptions. This is a useful exercise, because there are several notions which seem similar at first sight, but which differ yet basically from the phenomenon at hand here. Delineating happiness from such adjacent concepts is not an easy job. Not only are there many nearby concepts, but it is also quite difficult to talk about them. The confusion surrounding the term 'happiness' also occurs with words like 'well-being', 'satisfaction' and 'morale'. These terms also carry more than one meaning. Hence I cannot simply say how 'happiness' differs from e.g. 'morale'. Some definitions of

that term concur with happiness in my meaning and some do not. Moreover, each of the meanings of 'morale' figures under other names as well. An exhaustive delineation would thus require an inspection of all terms ever associated with something named happiness. These would all have to be analyzed, ordered into substantive categories and confronted with the defining criteria of happiness as used here. This would lead us too far. Hence I will confine myself to the main meanings of a few terms. I will begin with an analysis of the term 'well-being'. This term is the most confusing one. Charting its various meanings will help to pinpoint the meanings carried by several other terms to be discussed.

Well-being. In its broadest sense the term 'well-being' refers to any state which is desirable from some point of view. It is used in many more specific meanings as well. Elsewhere I have listed more than a hundred (Veenhoven, 1980).

First of all the term can denote both individual states and states of social systems. Sometimes both elements are covered, sometimes only one. Many authors leave that matter to the imagination of the reader. It is clear that my concept of happiness can match conceptions of individual well-being only.

Focusing on 'individual' well-being exclusively, we meet again the difference between the 'object' and the 'subject' view. Sometimes the term refers to conditions believed to be desirable in themselves, such as 'health', 'freedom' or 'self-actualization', while on other occasions it is used to depict a person's private evaluations, such as his 'self-esteem' or his 'acceptance of the political order'. Again it is often unclear what is meant. Obviously only 'subject' meanings of the term can match happiness as defined here.

In the category of 'individual-subject' meanings there is still a third difference. The term is used for 'overall evaluations' by the individual, but also for 'aspect-appraisals'. For example Andrews & Withey's book on 'Subjective Indicators of Well-being' deals not only with 'global' satisfaction with life, but also with evaluations in terms of 'freedom', 'safety' and 'beauty'. My concept of overall happiness refers to global evaluations only. Aspect-evaluations are embodied only in the separate concepts of 'hedonic level' and 'contentment'.

Finally the term well-being is not only used for evaluations of life-as-a- whole, but also for its specific domains. Quite often the term refers more or less exclusively to the individual's 'economic situation', to his 'work life' or to his 'social functioning'. It is clear that these latter meanings do not coincide with the present conception of happiness.

Quality of life. This term is almost synonymous with 'well-being'. It refers mostly to 'individual well-being' in the 'object' sense. However, it sometimes depicts the 'level of living' in a society at a certain time: in some instances exclusively to economic prosperity (national income, wage level) and sometimes to the supply of services in the realm of healthcare and education. These latter meanings of the term are clearly different from what is called 'happiness' here.

Morale. The term 'morale' is also used for individuals as well as for collectivities ('group morale', 'national morale'). Let me confine myself to 'individual morale'. Rundquist & Sletto (1936:201) defined individual morale as "confidence in one's ability to cope with future problems." As such it denotes self-reliance rather than happiness. Though self-reliance probably favors happiness, it does not guarantee it. Kutner et. al.'s (1956) concept of morale is broader. In fact his morale-scale is a bran-tub of desirable characteristics: 'perceived meaningfulness in life', 'planning-mindedness', 'perceived improvement of life' and 'satisfaction with life'. Only the latter item concurs with the concept at hand here. Cumming et al. (1958:6/7) mention even more morale criteria: 'vitality', 'interactional competence', 'flexibility of goals and means', 'fortitude' and 'the capability to choose goals one is able to achieve'. That view of morale is a typical 'object' one and hence does not fit the present conception. Finally Clark & Anderson (1967:116) defined morale as the 'affective dimension' of 'satisfaction with one's lot'. They probably had in mind what I call 'happiness'.

Positive mental health, self-actualization. The meanings of the term 'mental health' are many and varied. Mostly the term refers to absence of mental complaints and of 'pathological' symptoms. In that sense it clearly differs from what I call 'happiness'. Being free of mental problems does not mean that one evaluates one's life positively; certainly not when one enjoys this kind of mental health in a jail or in a concentration camp.

Distinguishing happiness from what is called 'positive mental health' is more difficult. 'Positive mental health' denotes excellent psychological functioning. Many criteria of psychological excellence have been proposed: 'autonomy', 'adequate perception of reality', 'ego strength', 'self-actualization' and - last but not least - 'happiness' (see e.g. Jahoda, 1958). The position of happiness as a mental health criterion is subject to debate, however. Some object that happiness may represent an inadequate perception of reality. Happiness excluded, the criteria just mentioned refer to individual

well-being in the 'object' sense. As such it fits the ancient notion of 'eudaemonia' better than the conception proposed here. See McGill (1967:162) for an analysis of the similarities of the ancient concept of eudaemonia with the modern notion of 'self-actualization'.

Adaptation, adjustment. The concept of 'adaptation' is again a broad one. The term usually refers both to given standards of appropriateness of coping behaviour and to the experiential taste of success. Sometimes it denotes the former only and in a few cases the latter exclusively. Where a personal appraisal of success in living is concerned the term is close to the present conception of happiness. In the other meaning it is not. Adaptation in the 'object' sense is obviously related to 'subject' happiness, but it is yet not the same.

Satisfaction. The term 'satisfaction' is used in several ways: Firstly as a 'pleasurable affective experience'. 'General satisfaction' is then equivalent to what I called 'hedonic level'. A second meaning points to the discrepancy between a wanted condition and perceived reality. 'General satisfaction' is then the same as what I named 'contentment'. Thirdly there is the somewhat broader meaning of 'enjoying something'. In this context the word is invariably followed by the conjunction *with*: 'satisfaction *with* marriage', 'satisfaction *with* safety at work', etc. If the term refers to the global satisfaction with 'life-as-a-whole' it denotes overall happiness; in all other cases it refers to so-called 'aspect-satisfactions'.

Depression. Happiness is sometimes depicted as the opposite of 'depression'. This is again a term with various meanings. Mostly the word refers to a syndrome involving unpleasant affect, apathy and a sense of meaninglessness. Characteristically that syndrome also involves a negative evaluation of one's life-as-a-whole. In that sense depressed persons are unhappy. However, the reverse is not true. Not all unhappy persons are apathetic or lacking a sense of purpose.

The term 'depression' is also used to contrast with 'elation'. In that context it usually refers to what I have called 'hedonic tone'. When used in that sense the term depicts mostly 'passing moods', but sometimes 'low hedonic level over longer periods'. Only in that latter meaning does it fit the present conceptualization of happiness; at least with the notion of hedonic level.

Optimism, hope. Finally the terms 'optimism' and 'hope'. These terms do

involve an 'overall' evaluation of one's life, but not an evaluation of one's life-as-a-whole. 'Life-as-a-whole' covers past, present and future. These two terms refer to the future only. As such they are synonymous with 'expected' happiness, but not with 'present' happiness.

2/5 SYNONYMS OF HAPPINESS

The concept delineated so far is often given other names than 'happiness'. To find out what labels are currently most used, I inspected a hundred reports of empirical investigations on the matter. I drew these reports at random from a larger pool of studies, which involved indicators that validly reflect the phenomena aimed at here. More about the selection of these investigations in the chapters 4 and 5. The theoretical labels used in the reports are presented in exhibit 2/5. It appears that some 15 names were given to what I call 'overall happiness' and more than twenty to what I label 'hedonic level'. Two synonyms of 'contentment' are noted. Of all names the term 'happiness' is used most frequently. The term 'life-satisfaction' is a second best.

Exhibit 2/5

Labels used for what I call 'happiness' in a 100 reports of empirical investigations on the matter.

<i>Theoretical label used</i>	<i>phenomenon actually observed</i>		
	<i>overall happiness</i>	<i>hedonic level of affect</i>	<i>contentment</i>
Average (pleasant) feelings		1	
Cheerfulness		2	
– general tendency to be cheerful		1	
Depression		1	
– trait elation-depression		1	
– depressive mood		1	
Elation		1	
Emotional tone		1	

to be continued on next page

Exhibit 2/5: continued

<i>theoretical label used</i>	<i>phenomenon actually observed</i>		
	<i>overall happiness</i>	<i>hedonic level of affect</i>	<i>contentment</i>
Enjoyment of life		1	
Euphoria		1	
Happiness	30	9	
– avowed happiness	3		
– happiness in general	1		
– overall happiness	1		
Hedonic level		2	
Malaise	1	1	
Mood		10	
– daily mood		1	
– general mood		3	
Morale	1	1	
Optimism		2	
Overall life-situation	1		
Perceived life-quality	1	1	
Satisfaction	1		
– satisfaction in general	1		
– general satisfaction	3		
– satisfaction of wants		1	1
– life-satisfaction	16		
– satisfaction with life in general	6		
– satisfaction with life-as-a-whole	2		
Success in goals			3
Well-being		1	
– psychological well-being	3	9	

2/6 SUMMARY

The term happiness has different meanings. In current scientific language it refers to various states of being that are considered 'good' for people as well as to different pleasurable states of mind. Here the term refers to an attitude towards one's own life.

Happiness is defined as the degree to which an individual's overall evaluation of his life-as-a-whole concludes positively. As such happiness is an experience, which only creatures of consciousness can undergo. It is an essentially experiential phenomenon which cannot be identified with particular external conditions or with a way of life.

'Overall' judgements of life are presumed to draw upon more specific appraisals. Two of these seem especially relevant. The first is 'hedonic level of affect': the degree to which affective experience is dominated by pleasantness during a certain period. The second is 'contentment': the degree to which an individual perceives his conscious aims to be achieved. I refer to these appraisals as the 'affective' and the 'cognitive' component of happiness respectively.

Happiness is not necessarily stable: people may change their attitudes towards life. Neither are happiness judgements always definite, nor does a person's appreciation of life necessarily match with ethical standards.

Happiness, as defined here, must be distinguished from what is commonly referred to by terms like 'well-being', 'quality of life', 'morale', 'mental health' and 'adjustment'. However, all these terms are used in varying ways. Some of their meanings do fit the object of this study.

Finally it must be observed that the phenomenon called 'happiness' here is currently given other names as well. Terms like 'life-satisfaction', and 'psychological well-being' sometimes cover the same.

CHAPTER 3

CAN HAPPINESS BE MEASURED?

Chapter two made clear that a person's happiness cannot be assessed on the basis of some external judgement of his living conditions or way of life: happiness is an essentially experiential matter. Hence we cannot infer happiness from directly observable matters such as 'wealth', 'health' or 'popularity'. We must in some way penetrate into the mind of the individual. There are basically two ways of assessing what an individual has in mind: the first is to observe his overt behavior and infer his thoughts and preferences on that basis. The second is simply to ask questions. Only the latter method promises valid results.

Happiness was defined as an attitude towards one's life. Like all attitudes, it can hardly be inferred from observations of overt behavior. People do not necessarily show themselves to be happy if they consider themselves happy. Unlike several emotions, happiness has no clear behavioral correlates; at least not that we know of. Possibly there are behavioral manifestations of hedonic level, such as frequent smiling, a cheerful tone and characteristic movements of the body. The relation of these behavior traits to the individual's inner experiences is not yet sufficiently investigated, however.

The claim that happiness cannot be assessed on the basis of observed behavior can be illustrated by the case of suicide. Suicide and suicidal intentions are sometimes used as indicators of unhappiness. For example Hart (1940)

suggests that suicide rates characterize the level of unhappiness in a nation. There are several reasons why this view is misleading: First, not all suicides are 'balanced' suicides; sometimes people commit suicide for reasons of honor or revenge rather than because they judge their lives negatively. Furthermore, suicide often appears to be more a matter of mental disturbance than a result of rational balancing of the pros and cons of life. Secondly, people who do not commit suicide are not necessarily happier than people who do. They may be equally unhappy, but simply lack the guts, or hold different views on the morality of suicide. In fact, suicide rates have been shown to vary greatly with culture and custom. They probably say more about how people cope with unhappiness than about their level of happiness. As a result the correlation between suicide rates and average response to happiness questions is low and positive rather than negative. I found r to be $+0.24$ ns in a sample of countries all over the world in 1975 and $+0.12$ (ns) in the EC countries in 1975. Both these data sets are described in section 6/1. (Tables not shown.)

This leaves us with the second method: the method of assessing happiness by questioning people. Can happiness be assessed in that way? Several authors claim it cannot. Below I will examine their objections in detail. It will appear that several objections can be discarded on the basis of empirical evidence. This evidence comes from investigations which used acceptable methods of questioning. In that respect this chapter runs ahead of the conclusions of the next one, which deals with the face-validity of currently used indicators of happiness.

3/1 VALIDITY PROBLEMS

There are several reasons for doubting that happiness can be assessed validly by questions. Some of these reasons were advanced earlier in philosophical debates, especially in the discussion about the Utilitarian claim that happiness can be quantified. Most are more recent and stem from the general problems of measurement that appeared in attitude research.

a. Are happiness judgements sufficiently current?

A preliminary question is whether there is a sufficient number of people who make up their mind about their life-as-a-whole. In section 2/2 I noted that not everybody necessarily does so. If there are many people who don't make

overall judgements of life, questions about happiness would often yield meaningless information. People who have no opinion on the matter are likely to respond haphazardly, or to refer to other matters. This suggestion raises two questions: firstly whether the people who have made up their mind can be distinguished from people who have not, and secondly whether the latter group is sizable or small.

'No answer' responses. If we want to know whether people have given any thought to their life-as-a-whole, we can simply ask them. To my knowledge no investigator has explicitly done so as yet. However I do know of more implicit attempts. Several investigators included 'no answer' categories in the rating-scales for registering answers to questions about happiness. For example Andrews & Withey (1976:362) use the answer categories 'Never thought about it' and 'Does not apply to me'. If people have not made up their mind, they are likely to use these categories; at least if allowed to do so anonymously. Responses of this kind appear infrequently. In the various investigations performed by Andrews & Withey less than one percent of the respondents answered that they had 'never thought about it'. (Andrews, 1974:286). Other studies yielded similar results: Cantril (1965:234) reports 5 percent 'no answers.' These respondents appeared to have skipped many other questions in the interview as well. The highest proportion of 'don't know' answers ever found in a national sample is 15 percent. This was in an investigation in France in 1948. See exhibit 6/ 1.3. In an investigation by myself the respondent was even allowed a greater opportunity to evade the matter of happiness. I used questions of the sentence completion type which could be answered in several ways. Nevertheless 88 percent gave answers that referred to the appreciation of life. (Veenhoven, in preparation).

Consistency of response. Despite several opportunities for admitting that they have no opinion, people could, nevertheless, prefer to act as if they had. If so, their responses can be expected to be haphazard; people then give just any answer rather than say nothing. Such a haphazard response is likely to give itself away in four effects: firstly in low equivalence scores of measures using more than one item, secondly in low repeat reliability, thirdly in a relatively high spread of responses and fourthly in absence of sizable correlations of happiness with other factors. None of these effects characteristically appears in empirical happiness studies. Stability through time in particular appears typically quite high. See sections 3/1c and 8/2c for more detail. Kammann et al. (1979:8) showed that this stability is not a matter of good memory.

Further, Andrews (1974:287) demonstrated that people who report a level of happiness other than that reported previously, were generally aware of a change in life quality.

Stereotyped response. If there are many people who made no overall judgement of life, we can also expect that questions about happiness yield very stereotyped responses. Questions then probably evoke instant comparisons of one's own existence with current standards of the good life. If that happened very frequently, we could expect sizeable associations between the level of avowed happiness and success with respect to such standards. This is partly true. For example 'marriage' is generally believed to bring happiness, and 'married status' does indeed go together with reports of greater happiness. However, public opinion on the happiness value of marriage changed considerably in the past decade. In the Netherlands this change was not accompanied by a decrease of the association between married status and happiness. (Veenhoven, 1979:146). Moreover self-reported happiness was shown to be unrelated to several factors commonly thought to be a main source of happiness. It is for instance slightly negatively related to 'having children' and it is less dependent on 'income' and 'education' than commonly assumed. Yet another matter is that the substitution of one's own standards by the standards perceived to be current in society should result in high correlations between ratings of one's own happiness and ratings of the happiness of other people; especially of people living in similar social conditions. This has been shown to be untrue. Andrews & Withey (1976:106) found happiness to be largely independent of the evaluated well-being of people in general and of the evaluated well-being of one's nearest adult neighbor of the same sex.

Promptness of reaction. A final argument is that people are not likely to respond immediately if they have not yet made up their mind. Even an instant judgement of one's life-as-a-whole would require a few minutes' thought. Characteristically, people do not need that time. They respond to happiness questions with "apparent ease" (Andrews, 1974:286).

All in all there is not much ground for the belief that most people have no opinion on whether they like their life or not, and that questions on the matter tap 'hot air' rather than something authentic.

b. Do people distinguish between happiness and other evaluations of life?

Even when people do respond seriously to questions on happiness, their responses may in fact concern other matters. It is not unlikely that people tend to report some mixture of satisfactions rather than a precise 'overall evaluation of life-as-a-whole'. The reader may remember that the foregoing chapter distinguished happiness from several subtly different matters, such as 'domain satisfactions', 'hope' and 'pleasantness'. (Section 2/6). Obviously most people are not aware of such differences. Does that mean that their answers to happiness questions are often beside the point?

A phenomenon most likely to be confused with happiness is 'mood of the moment'. For this reason several investigators checked whether questions on happiness tap the same information as questions on mood. Kammann et al. (1979:8) found that happiness ratings are only modestly correlated with immediate mood. Further they found the re-test reliability of their happiness rating to be far greater than that of the mood score. Andrews & Withey (1976:106) also found happiness to be largely independent of the 'mood on the day of the interview'. They noticed moreover that happiness is almost unrelated to the 'range and variability of changes in feelings'.

A second possibility worth mentioning is that people confuse 'is' and 'ought'. Instead of their actual appreciation of life they might report the level of appreciation they feel to be appropriate for decent people living in the same conditions as they do. Self-ratings of happiness then say more about a person's ideology than about his level of satisfaction. This possibility was stressed by Buttell et al. (1977). These investigators take great pains to show that acceptance of the political conditions under which one lives does indeed go together with a more positive evaluation of life. However, they themselves have to conclude that this does not prove their point. Validly measured happiness is quite likely to be related to satisfaction with political institutions: political-life being part of life-as-a-whole.

Obviously many more matters can be confused with happiness. Several of these possibilities were investigated by Andrews & Withey (1976), who performed a factor analysis on sixty-eight different measures of perceived life quality. These measures concerned evaluations of 'life-as-a-whole' as well as evaluations of 'specific life-domains', and 'overall-evaluations' as well as 'aspect-evaluations'. The set also included 'long range evaluations' as well as 'short range' ones, and strictly 'personal evaluations' as well as 'evaluations of life quality in comparison with others'. A clear pattern emerged in the factor

analysis. All measures indicative of a 'personal overall evaluation of life-as-a-whole' clustered together in one core cluster. This clustering occurred despite the use of different rating-scales (some verbal, some graphic), different questions (differently framed and using different key words) and two different information sources (the respondent himself and ratings by the interviewer). Andrews & Withey performed this analysis on several data sets with similar results. This leaves no doubt that clear questions on happiness yield responses which differ consistently from responses to questions on closely related phenomena.

c. Is happiness sufficiently stable?

Happiness judgements do not necessarily remain the same over a long period of time. If happiness were characteristically unstable, measurements would make little sense. Were ratings outdated the next day, there would be little perspective in relating them to the stable characteristics of life.

Happiness ratings appear far from unstable, however. Several investigators noted a high stability through time. Bradburn & Caplovitz (1965:85) found a retest correlation which equals tau $+0.43$ between a self-rating of happiness and a retest after eight months. Less than 2 percent of their respondents chose the opposite extremes, i.e. 'not too happy' at time one and 'very happy' at time two, or the reverse. Further results of this kind have been reported by Bradburn (1969:43/77), Campbell et al. (1975:66/185) and Andrews & Withey (1976:14/15). Section 8/2c reports several investigations covering longer periods. These found evaluations of life to be fairly stable as well.

Happiness was further shown to be largely independent of fluctuations in political and economic trends. The Cuba crisis, for example, hardly affected the happiness of the average American. (Bradburn & Caplovitz, 1965:125). People appear to evaluate their life not more positively in the spring than in the winter. Only where hedonic level is concerned do small seasonal variations appear. (Smith, 1979:26). That latter author demonstrated also that happiness is about as stable as political attitudes generally are (p.20).

d. Do people know their 'true' happiness?

In section 2/2 I noted that happiness judgements may be subject to the so-called 'defense mechanisms' of the mind. People may in their heart know that

they are disappointed with life, but repress that thought because they can not deal with its consequences. Repression may take several forms, each of which can affect the responses to questions about happiness differently.

Negation. Firstly people may simply try to stop thinking about the matter. People who tend to do so are likely not to respond to happiness questions at all. As shown in the above discussion on the prevalence of happiness judgements, 'no answer' and 'don't know' responses are not frequent. Hence this problem does not appear to be a significant one.

Distortion. A second way to avoid the confrontation with one's unhappiness may be trying to forget one's own standards and to replace them by less threatening ones. If this happens regularly we can expect an overrepresentation of 'happy' responses. This is characteristically the case indeed; at least in Western nations and in Latin America. Surveys in these parts of the world show typically that 60 to 80 percent of the people characterize themselves as 'happy'. Does this mean that these ratings are biased to a great extent? Not necessarily. There are at least three reasons for doubting that.

Firstly, happy responses are not always overrepresented. In the Far East and in Africa unhappiness is rather the rule. See exhibit 6/1a. Shortly after World War II unhappy responses were also more frequent in the war-stricken countries of Western Europe. See exhibit 6/1.3. The overrepresentation of happy responses is thus not something universal. Below, ad 'e', I will consider the possibility that there are cultural differences in pressures to appear happy.

Secondly there is no reason to assume that the distribution of 'true' happiness in a country cannot be skewed positively. In fact an even distribution can be expected only when departing from a 'zero sum' theory of happiness, to wit, if one assumes that people judge themselves happy only if they perceive themselves to be better off than others. In 9/2.3 I will show that this theory is unsatisfactory.

A third point is that frequent defensive distortion is likely to give rise to stereotyped patterns of response. If people do indeed tend to renounce their own 'true' standards in favor of less threatening 'false' ones, they are likely to resort to current standards of the good life. This possibility has already been discussed. Remember the discussion (ad 'a'). It appeared that self-ratings of happiness tend to be largely independent of surface criteria of success.

Though there is thus no convincing evidence for a significant defensive distortion

in responses to happiness questions, the possibility cannot be definitively ruled out either.

General defensiveness. Another way of checking whether self-ratings of happiness are biased to a great extent, is to relate them to indicators of 'general defensiveness'. If claims to be happy often represent defensive distortion, a positive statistical relationship should result. Clum & Clum (1973:509) do indeed report sizable correlations. They related reported hedonic level with the Gieser & Ihilivech (1969) 'Defense Mechanism Inventory'. Positive associations appeared with tendencies to 'intellectualization' and 'reversal'. Wessman & Ricks (1966:104/5) used different measures of defensiveness. They ranked their subjects on the basis of clinical experience and observation of their behavior and reactions in various experimental situations. This was done a year prior to the assessment of hedonic level. They found 'general repression and denial' to be unrelated to it. Likewise Gorman (1971:215) found reports of both overall happiness and hedonic level to be unrelated to the Jackson & Messick (1964) 'Repression Scale'. Finally McKinley Runyan (1980:60) found that subjects high in overall defensiveness (Kroeber-Haan) hardly report more past happiness. However, when the aspect of 'denial' was considered separately, significant differences did appear. Unfortunately the ratings of defensiveness were made by judges who knew about the subject's happiness statements.

All in all the tendency of defensive people to exaggerate their happiness seems at best modest. This matter will be discussed in more detail in section 7/2.2.

Non-verbal cues. Another way to check whether people who say they are happy really feel so, is to watch their non-verbal behavior: the joy in their face and the buoyancy reflected in their body posture and movements. We will meet this method again in section 4/2.3, where I will discuss indicators of hedonic level. Though happy people don't necessarily feel pleasant at the time of the interview, this method nevertheless provides a global check. If people frequently overstate their happiness we can expect that many sad looking people claim to be happy. This appears hardly to be the case. Noelle-Neuman (1977:244) found in a study in W.Germany that only 7 percent of the respondents claims to be happy in spite of a rather sad appearance, while no less than 38 percent cheerful-looking people claimed not to consider themselves happy. The phenomenon was no more frequent in the lower occupational

ranks than in the higher ones. However, among workers there was a greater tendency to say that one is unhappy without looking so.

Depth studies. Defensive bias in happiness judgements can also be estimated by comparing happiness *self-ratings* with *expert-ratings* made by psychologists who deliberately try to penetrate into subconscious levels. Two investigators did so. Goldings (1954:40) and Wessman & Ricks (1966:103/4) subjected their respondents to repeated and intensive clinical interviews. Goldings observed his subjects during three months. Wessman & Ricks followed their subjects during three years. The resulting expert-ratings of happiness appeared to be highly correlated with the subject's self-reports. In Goldings' study the ratings made by the most experienced clinician, who had seen the subject most often, correlated +.87 with self-ratings. Ratings made by other experts averaged +.45. Wessman & Ricks report a correlation of +.71. Unfortunately none of these investigators went further into the characteristics of the respondents whose self-rating did not agree with the expert's. The matter certainly deserves attention. Another thing to note is that the questions on self-estimated happiness used by Goldings do not quite fit the demands to be outlined in section 4/1. The self-ratings of Wessman & Ricks do not quite represent overall happiness either, but rather tap hedonic level.

Clearly there is more to be said on the subject. For the time being it seems that self-deceit is not as widespread a phenomenon as some believe. This does not mean that self-deceit never occurs.

e. Aren't people reluctant to talk about their happiness?

Even if people are aware of their happiness level, they may nevertheless be unwilling to talk about it. They may feel happiness to be too private a matter, or they may be ashamed or embarrassed to appear to be below or above average. If this were true, people would be unlikely to cooperate in happiness studies; in particular they would be unlikely to answer specific happiness questions. This is simply not the case. Refusal of cooperation in happiness studies is no greater than in other kinds of studies. (Andrews, 1974:286). Neither are the 'no answer' categories of multiple-choice questions used more frequently when the question concerns happiness. (Cantril, 1965 :234). So in this respect happiness would seem to be as researchable a matter as political attitudes or job satisfaction.

f. Do people talk honestly about their happiness?

If people know about their happiness and are not unwilling to talk about it, they may nevertheless tend to be dishonest in their communications on the matter. There are good reasons to expect dishonesty. Happiness is not a socially neutral matter. Happy people generally get more appreciation than unhappy people. (To be demonstrated in section 6/4.1e). Some believe that there is a social norm to appear happy. (Benedict, 1946:159). Moreover, saying that one is unhappy is generally interpreted as a call for attention, if not as a cry for help. Consequently people may be reluctant to admit publicly that they are unhappy. This is the so-called 'social desirability' bias. If this tendency does indeed exist, four consequences can be expected. Firstly an overstatement of happiness is likely to occur. Secondly we can expect more happy responses when people are interviewed by their peers than when they are questioned by an anonymous interviewer and least happy responses when people communicate their happiness by means of a questionnaire. A third consequence must be that people who are most aware of a social norm to appear happy claim to be happy more often. Finally a fourth consequence would be that typical conformists more often claim to be happy than others: especially when these are aware of a social norm to appear happy. Let me discuss these consequences one by one.

Overstatement of happiness? A tendency to overstate one's happiness can have two effects: Firstly it may result in more happy responses than unhappy ones and secondly it may induce most people to claim to be more happy than average.

The first effect has already been discussed above. As we have seen happy responses are indeed more frequent in Western nations and in Latin-America, yet unhappy responses appeared the rule in Africa and East-Asia. Thirty years ago they were also more frequent in the war-stricken countries of Western-Europe. Are these differences due to variation in social pressure to appear happy? It is often suggested that such pressure is part of the middle class American way of life. However, I do not know of any evidence that such pressures are equally strong in Latin-America and that they are absent or reversed in Africa or East-Asia. An investigation into that matter would be worthwhile. For the time being it seems unlikely that the current over-representation of happy responses in Western-European countries results to a great extent from a desirability effect. If such an effect exists now, it

should also have existed thirty years ago. Values of this kind do not change that quickly.

Then the second prediction: people do indeed rate their own happiness higher than the level they perceive characteristic for the average citizen (Goldings, 1954:36). Similar optimistic self-ratings have been observed on matters such as 'self-esteem' and 'mental health' (Meyers, 1980). Though this phenomenon can be interpreted as the result of social desirability bias, there are other possible explanations. It could be that people characteristically underestimate their fellowman's happiness. They may be victim to the 'pathetic fallacy' (Deutsch, 1960). This tendency to see more misfortune in the other than in oneself could root partly in the fact that manifestations of unhappiness are more apparent than signs of positive happiness. Perhaps it is also stimulated by the mass-media tending to emphasize the former more often than the latter. Moreover people may tend to assume that there are as many happy as unhappy people. Judging oneself happy then automatically means being happier than average. For the time being these alternative interpretations are equally plausible.

The less anonymity, the more happiness reported? Suchman (1967) compared the responses to the same happiness question posed in a personal interview and asked by means of an anonymous questionnaire. In the first case he found that 36 percent of the respondents claimed to be 'very happy', in the latter only 23 percent. Similarly, high tuned answers to questions on happiness appeared more frequent in face to face interviews than in interviews by telephone (Smith, 1979:27).

A related finding was reported long ago by Watson (1930:108). Watson observed that respondents who identify themselves as unhappy on a questionnaire believe they generally give an impression of greater happiness to their peers. Thus an anonymous investigator seems more likely to identify unhappy persons than these persons' close friends.

Goldings (1954:37) reported findings which seem to contradict these results at first sight. He studied a number of students, half of which had participated in his investigation during three or four months. During that time they had established a confident relationship with the interviewer. The other half had no previous contact with the interviewer. The latter group reported somewhat higher levels of happiness. This finding may be interpreted in two ways: the confident relationship may have enabled the former group to admit to unhappiness, which they would not do to a stranger. This is how Goldings interprets it. A second possible explanation is that social desirability

works out differently in this case. The social context of this investigation was characterized by the normative expectation of psychological disclosure. Instead of over-avowal of happiness, under-avowal may have occurred. It is as yet unclear which effect was stronger.

Anyway, all these investigations suggest that social desirability bias is relatively high in the personal interviews. This is a noteworthy thing, because most happiness investigators have gathered their data in that way.

The stronger the norm, the more happiness reported? Do people who are most aware of the social desirability of happiness report higher levels of happiness indeed? This matter is not investigated as yet. Phillips & Clancy (1972) claim to have focused on it, but they assessed in fact a subtly different phenomenon. Instead of 'social' desirability effects they tapped 'personal' desirability effects. They asked their respondents how desirable they themselves judged the characteristics of happiness; not how desirable they thought other people deem happiness (p.926). Nevertheless the results of Phillips & Clancy are worth mentioning. They found that their subjects who saw happiness as a desirable trait, characterized themselves somewhat more often as 'very happy' (p.927). As in the preceding cases, this result does not necessarily mean that happiness ratings are biased. It could also be that happy people tend to rate their own characteristic traits as relatively desirable. In the same vein unhappy people could have resorted to saying that there are more important things than happiness. This matter is discussed in more detail in section 7/5.4b. It is again unclear which effect has been strongest.

The more conformistic, the more happiness reported? Not all people are equally liable to social pressures. The ones who are most, are most likely to overstate their happiness. Several investigators tried to verify that prediction. They related self-ratings of happiness to indicators of the 'need for social approval'. The Crowne-Marlowe (1964) scale is the most widely used for that purpose. This scale includes items such as 'I never hesitate to go out of my way to help someone in trouble' and 'There have been times when I was quite jealous of the good fortune of others'. Scores on this scale tend to be modestly but significantly related to avowed overall happiness. (E.g. Phillips & Clancy, 1972:929; Campbell et al., 1976:109). Similar links appear with hedonic level. See Harder (1969:50) and Warehime & Jones (1972:190).

Again we must be cautious not to jump to conclusions. Firstly, there are also contradictory findings. For example, Gorman (1971:218) found the Crowne-Marlowe scale to be unrelated to either overall happiness or to hedonic level

of affect. Secondly, the relationships that apparently exist do not necessarily mean that self-ratings of happiness are biased. The correlations may also result from the fact that happier persons have good reasons to characterize themselves in a desirable fashion on the Crowne-Marlowe items. Happy persons may indeed be less likely to 'hesitate to help someone in trouble'. In fact, happiness and mood have been shown to be important predictors of helping behavior. (Harris & Smith, 1975). Similarly, one can imagine that happy people do indeed feel less jealous of the good fortune of others. Obviously there are more appropriate indicators of the tendency to conform to social pressures. For example the laboratory tests used by Asch (1951). As far as I know such indicators have not been related to happiness as yet.

All in all there is no doubt that people do experience social pressures to appear happy. These pressures may work out in two ways: they may distort the individual's judgement (discussed under 'd') and they may color his answers. There is good reason to believe that more or less public statements do indeed tend to be biased somewhat. As yet there is no evidence that this bias occurs in anonymous reports. Neither is it clear to what extent the bias varies with adherence to the happiness norm and with conformity. For the time being I assume that people talk honestly about their happiness, if provided with sufficient anonymity.

g. Can happiness indicators be validated?

The foregoing sections raised several doubts concerning the validity of happiness indicators. Some of these doubts were rebutted, but several remain. Possibly there are more threats to the validity of happiness indicators: threats I failed to recognize.

In order to deal with such unsettled questions and possible hidden weaknesses, empirical indicators are usually subjected to so-called 'validity-tests'. There are several kinds of validity tests. One is to compare the indicator to another indicator of the same phenomenon. For example to gauge a weight by means of a standard weight. This is called testing for 'congruent' validity. Another approach is to assess the correspondence with another phenomenon to which the phenomenon to be indicated is known to be related: for example to validate questions intended to tap political alienation by means of non-voting behavior. This is called testing for 'concurrent validity'.

Concurrent validity testing. Several investigators claim to have demonstrated considerable 'concurrent' validity for their happiness indicators. Various criteria were used; mostly criteria based on pre-conceived notions about the good life. In this vein Rodgers & Converse (1975:147) boast of the correlations their happiness indicator yields with matters of social success, such as 'married status', 'having work' and 'income'. Likewise other investigators point at the correspondence of their happiness scores with indicators of mental effectiveness. For example Kammann et al. (1979:7) used 'absence of neurotism' as a validation criterion. They claim validity of their happiness indicator in that the people with a high score on this measure tend to be less neurotic than those with a low score.

In my view these exercises make no sense. Conditions deemed beneficial by these investigators do not necessarily correspond with a positive appreciation of life by their subjects. A man may have a wife, a job and a lot of money, but nevertheless consider his life a failure. Likewise someone who is not neurotic will not necessarily judge his life positively. In fact, it is not possible to validate happiness measures by means of any such external criteria of the good life. That would be possible only if we knew for sure that the kind of life they characterize is enjoyed equally much by everybody. Unfortunately we do not: it is actually the purpose of this study to explore which conditions add to a positive appreciation of life. Hence these procedures demonstrate only that the indicators measure 'something', not that they measure 'happiness'.

A somewhat better approach to the concurrent validation of happiness indicators is to compare them with reports on satisfaction experienced in specific 'domains' of life. One may argue that a person who judges his life-as-a-whole favorably, must also show satisfaction with the major domains of life. In this vein Rodgers & Converse (1975:147) praise the associations their happiness indicator yields with reported satisfactions in the domains of 'marriage', 'work' and 'income'. Obviously such procedures can convince only if all the relevant aspects of life are considered and if difference in importance is taken into account. This is not quite feasible. Yet imperfect attempts to do so showed that sets of a dozen life-aspect satisfactions explain the bulk of the variance in overall evaluations of life (e.g. Andrews & Withey, 1976:244, Michalos, 1983:232/237).

Though these observations are not to be ignored, they do not really prove the validity of the happiness indicators involved, self-reports on satisfaction with aspects of life being liable to the same biases as self reports about satisfaction with life-as-a-whole.

Congruent validity testing. This leaves us with the possibility of assessing 'congruent' validity: of validating one happiness indicator by means of the other. This approach obviously requires that we must be sure about the validity of at least one happiness indicator: the measure that is used as a standard. Unfortunately this requirement cannot be met. We are not sure of the validity of any. Theoretically all indicators intended to tap happiness can produce perfect intercorrelations because they all suffer the same bias. For example all may represent assessments of how persons in a certain situation think they should feel rather than how they actually do feel, or all may be biased by defensive strategies of the mind.

Though possible, this is not likely. Such systematic bias is especially unlikely where the indicators are very diverse and have a high face validity. 'Face validity' of happiness indicators is the degree to which the questions used clearly focus on the overall appreciation of life-as-a-whole. In the next chapter I will select the ones that seem appropriate in this respect. Let us now look at the few tests of congruent validity which have involved several of such indicators.

Congruent validity can be assessed in two ways: the first is to assess the correspondence in the ratings yielded by two or more measures. This is done by computing intercorrelations. The second method is more complicated. It involves the comparison with a 'common factor'. Scores on different happiness measures are subjected to factor analysis. If one main factor emerges each measure is correlated with this factor. The measure which produces the highest correlations with this factor is then regarded as the most valid one. This latter procedure is commonly referred to as 'construct validity' testing. Let's take a look at the results yielded by these methods.

Simple intercorrelations. Most research on this matter concerns differently formulated questions; questions asking for 'happiness', 'general satisfaction', 'evaluation of life-as-a-whole', etc. Characteristically such questions produce intercorrelations in the order of +.60. See Andrews (1974:15); Abrams & Hall (1972:21) and Beiser (1974: 325). This all suggests reasonable validity, but let us not forget that such correlations make sense only if the measures compared are not identical. All the results mentioned so far concern more or less identical measures however: all direct questions, posed in a same contexts differing only slightly in wording. The only investigations that compared essentially different measures are the studies mentioned earlier, by Goldings (1954) and Wessman & Ricks (1966). These studies compared self-ratings to expert-ratings. As may be remembered the correlations were quite

high: respectively +.87 and +.71. Unfortunately these two investigations are less strong on face-validity. As already noted the questions Goldings used to elicit a self-rating do not quite cover the overall evaluation of life-as-a-whole, while Wessman & Ricks assessed hedonic level rather than overall happiness. Moreover we will see in the next chapter that expert-ratings cannot always be trusted.

Construct validity testing. Many investigators have subjected sets of happiness-like items to a factor analysis. The cluster of items they estimate closest to the matter is then proclaimed happiness indicator. Unfortunately most such clusters contain questions we will see to be invalid in the next chapter: for example questions on whether one feels 'physically fit', whether one regards oneself 'happier than others' and whether one has 'plans for the future'. As yet only Andrews and his colleagues have assessed construct validity in a sizable set of acceptable items. (Andrews & Withey, 1976:ch.10; Andrews & Crandall, 1976). On the basis of several investigations they conclude that simple direct questions on satisfaction with life-as-a-whole tend to show a high construct validity. About 65 percent variance in the answers to that question appeared to reflect differences in the 'common factor'. Andrews estimates that valid variance can be raised to 80 percent if the most successful items are combined. (Andrews, 1974:286). Though encouraging, these results are not a great surprise. The indicators Andrews compared are quite similar. All are simple self-ratings and all are based on questionnaire items. The measures only differ in the wording of the questions, the rating scales used and to some extent in the frame of reference they emphasize.

All in all I must conclude that the validity of happiness indicators can hardly be demonstrated conclusively. Concurrent validity testing of happiness indicators is virtually impossible. We have no definite theories about the relationships of happiness to any other kind of observable phenomenon. Assessment of congruent validity is not quite possible either. We cannot be sure of the validity of any happiness indicator. If we focus on interview questions of high face validity and assume that they do not suffer the same bias, empirical findings can be interpreted as suggesting considerable concurrent validity of some direct questions. Until the reverse has been proven I will assume that these indicators do in fact tap happiness.

3/2 RELIABILITY PROBLEMS

Besides the validity problems there are more technical obstacles, commonly referred to as matters of 'reliability'. Questions may give rise to different interpretations, rating scales may influence responses, private interviewer attitudes may come to dominate the scene, etc. As a result, similar questions can yield different answers.

Such reliability problems do not only beset happiness questions. They appear in all assessments of mental states by means of interrogation. Generally speaking, current techniques are sufficiently sophisticated to keep such biases within acceptable limits. Here the question is whether they suffice in this particular case. An exhaustive answer to the question is not possible. All I can do is inspect the magnitude of a few of the most apparent reliability problems.

a. Interviewer bias.

Happiness is often assessed in more or less personal interviews. Several kinds of bias may then occur. Firstly, interviewers may project their own happiness into the words of the respondent. Thus a happy interviewer may perceive respondents as more happy than they in fact say they are. Such effects were suggested by Goldings (1954:41/45) and Rosenthal (1966:125/6). Phillips & Clancy (1972) investigated the matter. They found only a slight association between the happiness reported by the interviewers themselves and the happiness these interviewers perceived their respondents to report. In cases where the respondents were better educated than the interviewer the association was somewhat greater (p.251).

Another possible source of interviewer bias is the impression the interviewer forms about the respondent. When an interviewer deems the respondent to be neurotic, he is less likely to hear that person say he is happy. Zautra et. al. (1977:87/93) assessed the magnitude of such effects. They asked their interviewers to rate the respondent on his 'friendliness', 'anger', 'interest', 'openness', 'activity', 'health' and 'overall mood'. These ratings appeared to have little or no influence on the ratings of reported life quality made by the interviewers.

Also more permanent attitudes from the side of the interviewers may cause bias. Interviewers may hold private theories on happiness. For example an interviewer may consider social rank to be a major source of happiness

and therefore be apt to underestimate reports of happiness made by lower class respondents. As far as I know the magnitude of such effects has not yet been assessed. Freitag & Barry (1974:722) investigated a related phenomenon. They related attitudes of interviewers towards the aged with the life-satisfaction these interviewers observed in elderly people. They found no relationships. Nor did life-satisfaction scores appear to be associated with interviewer characteristics such as 'gender', 'race', 'age' or 'retired status'.

A final potential source of bias to be mentioned is the degree of 'rapport' established between the interviewer and the respondent. Good rapport may facilitate more honest responses. Insofar as it threatens anonymity it may rather reduce honesty, however: remember section 3/1e. The quality of rapport can also effect the interviewer. Sympathy may bias his perceptions positively. In order to test whether these effects occur, Zaustra et al. (1977: 87/93) asked their interviewers to count the number of times the respondent established eye-contact. The frequency of eye-contacts appeared unrelated to the level of life-quality the interviewers observed respondents reporting. Another variable in this context is the embarrassment an interviewer feels when inquiring about private matters. Freitag & Barry (1974:772) showed this variable to affect life-satisfaction ratings. Unfortunately they do not report whether it colors them positively or negatively.

Obviously a lot more interviewer effects can play a role. It is for future research to formulate and test these effects. For the time being interviewer bias in happiness ratings does not appear too dramatic. Obviously even these limited distortions can be avoided by using questionnaires instead of personal interviews.

b. Response-style bias

Next to the response-set differences discussed in the foregoing section (e.g. defensiveness and desirability bias) there are 'style' differences, which might influence response independently of item content, e.g. 'yea saying', 'nay saying' and 'extreme position response bias'. Such tendencies do influence responses to questions involving guesses slightly (e.g. pick a number between 1 and 10 or phoney ESP experiments), but there are no indications that they affect responses to personality and attitude items to any extent (Rorer, 1965). Still Wessman & Ricks (1966:105) assessed the impact of such tendencies on daily reports of hedonic level. They found no relation with 'habitual

use of strong words' and 'habitual non-conformism'. On the other hand they found negative relations with 'eccentricity and carelessness in responding', with 'test evasiveness' and with 'habitual yes-saying'. It is unclear whether these findings indicate response-style bias or whether they represent spurious correlations: the response tendencies being actually linked with broader personality traits to which hedonic level is related as well.

Another danger is 'consistency-bias': the tendency to disregard differences in questions and to respond to them in a similar way. This is most likely to occur when questions on happiness figure in a longer list of questions on life-aspect-satisfactions: especially when all the answers are scored on a similar rating scale. This matter has been considered by Pommer & Van Praag (1978: 44). They found the effect to be minimal.

c. Contextual bias

Questions on happiness always figure in the wider context of an interview or a questionnaire. When contexts differ, identical questions may be interpreted somewhat differently.

Such an effect was demonstrated by Andrews & Withey (1976:77). A single question on life-satisfaction at the beginning of an interview appeared to evoke slightly less positive answers than when posed at the end of the interview. Wilkening & McGranahan (1978) also asked the same question twice. The first time it figured in the beginning of the questionnaire, after a series of questions about the community. The second time it followed a series of more personal questions about the person's satisfaction with himself and his accomplishments. The first question appeared to be answered more positively (p.215). Moreover the position of the questions appeared to have a light effect on the association with other variables. The first happiness rating was linked somewhat more with factors such as 'unemployment' and 'church attendance', while the latter one associated slightly more strongly to 'social rank' and 'marital break-up' (p. 227).

There are two ways of dealing with this problem. The first is to minimize the effects of any specific frame of reference, by asking about happiness after a series of questions covering various life-domains. A second possibility is to ask the same question twice and to use the average score. Andrews & Withey used the latter method. They showed that their average score associated slightly more strongly with other indicators of happiness than the same questions did separately.

Obviously more contextual differences can be of influence. For example

Smith (1979:27/28) showed that happiness questions are somewhat more positively answered if preceded by a question about marital satisfaction, while Brickman et al. (1978:922) noted a slight tendency to respond more optimistically when the interview focused on lottery winning. I hope this matter will not be forgotten in future research. For the time being this kind of bias does not seem to be too serious.

d. Method effects

As will be shown in more detail in the next chapter, there are many subtly differing ways of interrogating a person about his level of happiness. Each of these methods may yield special distortions. For example, face-to-face interviews may produce more desirability bias and questionnaire techniques a greater non-response. Similarly, open-ended questions may leave more room for evasive answers, while multiple choice questions may be more liable to response-sets. In the same way special biases may go together with different types of rating scales and with differently worded questions. The relative vulnerability of all these methods for all possible effects is not established as yet. Andrews & Withey (1976:204) made the first systematic attempt. They compared seven different rating scales. Identical questions on perceived life quality were posed seven times during the interview: each time the answer was rated on another rating scale. This allowed the investigators to assess the amount of variance caused by different rating scales. The most neutral scale appeared to be the so-called 'Delighted-Terrible Scale'.

All in all it is clear that there are reliability problems in measuring happiness. It is also clear that these problems do not apply equally to all indicators. The biases that we know of do not appear to be very dramatic.

3/3 PROBLEMS OF COMPARISON

If we can validly and reliably establish that a person judges his life positively, may we then say this person is 'more' happy than someone who claims to judge his life negatively? It would seem so at first sight. However, several objections can be raised. These objections are serious enough to deserve attention.

a. Are appraisals of life not too much qualitative a matter to allow quantitative comparison?

This question is a current theme in discussions on happiness. It is argued that people differ greatly in the standards they use in judging their lives. Not only because cultures differ widely in what they characterize as a 'good life', but also because there are great inter-individual differences within cultures. It is even claimed that one cannot compare the happiness ratings of one and the same person at different points in time, because individual criteria of evaluation tend to change.

In fact, this question has already been answered in section 2/2. My point is that all appraisals have one aspect in common, which does allow comparison. In the case of overall happiness this is the aspect of 'favorableness' in the evaluation; in the case of hedonic level this is the experience of 'pleasantness', and in the case of contentment the perceived 'realization' of aspirations. Likewise one can compare the 'deliciousness' of apples and pears. Though these fruits taste somewhat differently we are quite able to decide which we like best.

b. Is the happiness continuum the same for everybody?

If two persons both claim to judge their life as 'favorable', are these people then equally happy? It could be argued that such a conceptualization might be misleading. It is possible that the judgements in fact reflect different experiences at the phenomenological level. This could be so if there were no agreed continuum of favorableness: i.e. if we agreed only about the semantic labels we use to depict positions on such a continuum, while the experimental qualities these labels reflect differ for each individual.

In fact it is probably true that people construct their own notions of what is 'favorable' and 'unfavorable'. These notions are largely based on their own experience. Thus each individual may develop a somewhat different conception of the happiness-unhappiness continuum. For example: a person who experienced nothing but good fortune all his life may be unaware of how unhappy he could possibly feel. As a result the continuum he envisages would be relatively short and the kind of life he labels as 'unhappy' might be the same as the one another would characterize as 'fairly happy'. This problem does not occur only in the comparison of happiness judgements. It concerns

all other appraisals as well. If two people say a rose is red, we cannot be sure that they experience the same redness.

There is no doubt that such differences are possible. The question is rather whether they are great or small. Unfortunately that question cannot be answered directly. The naked experience of 'favorableness' in a judgement cannot be assessed. We know about it only indirectly; the individual concerned must grasp it with his own concepts and then communicate it to us in his language. However, there are arguments which suggest that the differences in the ranges people have in mind are generally not too great.

First of all it is clear that the perceived range between 'very happy' and 'very unhappy' cannot be determined by the individual's earlier experiences exclusively. If that were true we could expect two consequences, which both fail to occur. One consequence would be that people could not think of more happiness or unhappiness than they have experienced personally. However, most of us know introspectively that we can think of more. We can at least imagine that others are more happy or unhappy than we have ever been ourselves. Another consequence would be that people tend to rate themselves as 'averagely happy'. If their evaluation is entirely framed by their 'best' and their 'worst' times, they must often rate themselves in-between. Above in section 3/1b we saw that this is typically not the case. Furthermore, it is simply impossible for an individual to construe ranges of appreciation merely by confronting 'best' and 'worst' experiences. How should he evaluate his first experience? Infants have no learned anchors for appreciation. Yet they evidently experience likes and dislikes. Clearly there is a given potency for appreciation, which is probably highly similar in all humans. Though this inborn potential can be variously differentiated and modeled by (cultural bound) experience, we have at least a more or less common start.

Secondly people know of more experiences than their own ones. They are continuously confronted with evaluations of life by their fellow men: in personal contacts as well as in fiction and the media. They thus learn what variants of happiness are possible; at least in so far as their culture is concerned.

Finally, if happiness ratings did not lend themselves to comparison, it is unlikely that they could vary similarly and consistently with essentially different matters. Yet chapters 6 and 7 will show that they do. Happiness ratings tend to correlate with 'marital status', 'longevity', 'social prestige', 'national income', etc. Possibly these correlations could have been more pronounced if the happiness ranges people have in mind were more similar.

One may wonder whether all happiness continua are equally likely to differ among individuals. In this respect there seems to be a difference between the 'affective' and the 'cognitive' component of happiness. Affective experience of 'like' and 'dislike' seems to be the most primary matter. Developmentally it appears to precede the more rational 'appreciation' of things. Therefore appraisals of the difference between 'pleasantness' and 'unpleasantness' of affect could be less subject to variation than appraisals of differences in 'favorableness' of life-as-a-whole or of 'realization' of aspirations.

c. Can happiness levels be precisely communicated?

If people use more or less similar ranges of appreciation, it is still possible that they label the positions on these ranges differently. Though people would then probably agree about the experiential qualities they associate with terms that describe the extremes of the continuum (e.g. 'delighted' or 'terrible'), it is likely that they differ somewhat in the choice of the words they use for the intermediate levels. For example when a person claims to be 'fairly happy', he may refer to a life another person would have called 'not too happy'. Unfortunately there is no intersubjective standard by which these terms can be gauged.

d. Can someone be said to be twice as happy as someone else?

If the former two problems did not exist, would it then be possible to assess happiness at the so-called 'ratio-level' of measurement? This would require happiness to be rated in equal intervals and that an absolute zero point of happiness exists. Neither of these requirements can be met. Hence the best we can do is to say that someone is 'more' happy than some else. We can not say 'how much' happier he is. We cannot say so, even when talking about our own happiness. I can say that I am happier now than when I was a teenager, but I cannot say that I am now twice as happy. This means that happiness can be measured only at the 'ordinal' level. Consequently the statistical procedures used in processing happiness scores must be suited to that level of measurement. This seriously limits the possibilities for statistical analysis. Unfortunately not all investigators seem to realize this limitation.

3/4 SUMMARY

Happiness can be assessed only by asking people about it. That is at least true for 'overall happiness' and 'contentment'. 'Hedonic level' can to some extent be inferred from non-verbal cues.

Several doubts are being raised about the quality of responses to questions on happiness: especially about the validity of direct questions on overall happiness. It is suggested that people do not know, that they are reluctant to discuss the matter, that they fool themselves, that they try to appear happier than they know they are, etc. Most of these doubts can be discarded on the basis of empirical evidence. It was for example shown that most people have quite definite ideas on whether they are happy or not and it is hence unlikely that questions on the matter tap hot air only. Not all objections can be discarded however; especially not the objection that people may fool themselves as well as interviewers by pretending to be more happy than they in fact are. Yet none of these doubts have been proven true either. It is as yet plainly unclear to what extent they apply. It has neither been ascertained whether any further, as yet unrecognized, distortions are involved. Unfortunately the matter can hardly be settled by testing for 'congruent' or 'concurrent' validity.

Next to doubts about validity there are questions about the technical 'reliability' of self-reports of happiness. It is objected that responses tend to be heavily biased by for instance interviewer characteristics, answer formats and contextual cues. Checked empirically, these distortions do not appear too dramatic, however.

Though not convincingly demonstrated, the various objections are still serious enough to be taken into account. They suggest at least four working rules: Firstly, self-ratings are to be preferred to ratings by others. Secondly, anonymous questionnaires work better than personal interviews. Thirdly, the context of the questionnaire as well as the key-questions must be focused clearly on the 'overall' appreciation of 'life-as-a-whole'. Fourthly, questions must leave room for 'no answer' or 'don't know' responses.

Fewer solutions seem available for the problem of comparison. We are not sure whether two people, both claiming to be happy, are in fact talking about identical levels of appreciation. This implies that respondents can be ranked for happiness only rather crudely. In practice this means that statistical correlations of measured happiness will be somewhat less pronounced than correlations of true happiness.

Possibly one or more of the various objections to happiness testing will in due be convincingly substantiated; for the time being attempts to measure happiness deserve the benefit of the doubt.

CHAPTER 4

INDICATORS OF HAPPINESS

Having established that happiness can be measured in principle, we can now proceed to consider the specific methods of assessing it. We then meet with a great variety of questions and interrogation techniques. During the last decades more than a hundred methods have been proposed; some of them bearing impressive names such as 'Life Satisfaction Index', 'General Satisfaction Score' or 'Happiness Scale'. Many of these labor under rather obvious defects.

Most methods depend on questioning. Hence the most current defect is that questions are inappropriate. Several ask in fact about subtly different things than about 'happiness' as defined here. Close reading shows that many items figuring in so-called 'happiness-scales' refer to things like 'optimism', 'frustration tolerance' and 'social adjustment'. Investigators who use such questions typically fail to define happiness formally.

Another current defect is that methods are not sufficiently specific. Some 'expert-ratings' for example are unclear about what the expert regards as happiness. Similarly methods based on 'content analysis' sometimes lack clear instructions for interpretation. Again this is often a result of slovenly conceptualization. Sometimes even more basic defects appear; for example when happiness is assessed on the basis of estimates by people who do not know the individual's private thoughts.

Below I will inspect all of the various methods for such defects. I will consider their questions, instructions and procedures in detail and check whether they fit in with my formal definition of happiness. When the methods appear not to accommodate my concept, they probably tap something else and must hence be considered inadequate for the purpose of this study. This is what is called '*face validity* testing'. It will appear that this common sense procedure clears the field drastically. More than half of the currently used 'happiness' indicators can be left out. Curiously enough no one has as yet selected happiness indicators in this way. Investigators rather engage in statistical validity testing. Lacking a clear conceptualization, this is mostly a senseless exercise.

For most indicators it was clear whether or not they fitted in with the present conceptualization of happiness. Yet in some instances there was doubt: in particular in the case of the methods which seemed vulnerable to distortion. Choices on the matter were complicated by the fact that validity demands are not identical for all three happiness variants and that observational methods cannot all be judged by the same criteria. For all that, I had to decide between acceptance and rejection, even if this involved a somewhat arbitrary choice.

I will now first inspect the main indicators of *overall happiness*. (Section 4/1). Then I will discuss current indicators of *hedonic level* (4/2) and some stray questions on *contentment* (4/3). On that basis I will then consider the validity of some composites covering two or more of these indicators. (Section 4/4). Finally I will inspect whether the first three kinds of indicators do indeed tap different things. (Section 4/5).

4/1 INDICATORS OF OVERALL HAPPINESS

As noted in the preceding chapter overall happiness can be assessed only by questioning people. Questions can broach the matter directly or indirectly. I will first consider the various *direct questions* on overall happiness. (Section 4/1.1). The next section will deal with currently used *indirect questions*. (Section 4/1.2). Finally section 4/1.3 will report some idle attempts to assess an individual's happiness by means of *ratings by others*.

4/1.1 DIRECT QUESTIONS

Direct questions on happiness may be 'closed' or 'open'. Questions of the

former kind require that the respondent chooses among a set of fixed answer categories. Questions of the latter kind allow him to word the answers himself. Let's take a glance at the various direct questions used for assessing happiness: to begin with the closed ones.

a. Closed questions

Most investigators used questions of the multiple choice type. A great many such questions were proposed and a lot of energy was invested in finding out which of them work best. The various questions differ in at least four respects. Firstly they differ in the words to designate 'happiness', secondly they differ in the rating-scales on which the answer is recorded and thirdly in the temporal context in which they place the evaluation of life. A fourth difference is that some investigators use one single question, while others use composite scores of two or more questions.

Wording. Questions on happiness can be worded in several ways. Some of the most current formulations are presented in exhibit 4/1 a. (p. 68-69). Not all focus equally precisely on overall happiness as defined here. The questions at the bottom of the exhibit do in fact concern something else, while the questions in the middle may possibly give rise to misunderstanding.

Let us first consider the questions at the bottom, starting with Fellow's question. This item does not focus on the respondent's evaluation of life as such, but rather on the difference he perceives with the life-satisfaction of others. It may be that someone feels quite unhappy, but nevertheless believes that most other people are even unhappier. Such a person would nevertheless answer Fellow's question positively. Lebo's question neither refers to happiness as such, but rather to 'perceived increase in happiness'. A person who is now happier than before is not necessarily happy. He may feel somewhat less miserable, but still be dissatisfied with life. Nevertheless that person would answer Lebo's question positively as well.

A similar objection applies to the next question in the exhibit. This question is part of Neugarten's well-known 20-item 'Life-satisfaction Index A'. This question does not indicate 'happiness', but rather the chances of 'greater happiness'. A person who is less happy than he thinks he 'could possibly be' is not necessarily an unhappy one. Nevertheless a positive answer to this question is again taken as an indication of unhappiness.

Finally the other item in Neugarten's 'Life-satisfaction Index' mixes up

'personal happiness' with the 'general well-being'. Somebody who thinks that the general quality of life is improving is not necessarily happy himself. In fact these phenomena are hardly related. In the US ratings of one's personal happiness appeared unrelated to estimates of the happiness of others (Andrews & Withey, 1976:92). Likewise personal happiness remained fairly constant between 1974 and 1980 in the Netherlands, notwithstanding a growing pessimism about the future of the country (SCP 1982:220/7). It is clear that such questions cannot be accepted as a valid indicator of overall happiness. They are hence all invoked with '-'.

Things are less obvious when we consider the middle category in the exhibit. All these questions use the term 'happiness'. The problem is that this term does not have a fixed meaning in common language. Remember section 2/ 1a, which enumerated no less than ten different connotations. Most of these meanings probably will be ruled out by the context of the interview and the question. However, this does not eliminate all possible misunderstandings. Often the word happiness may be interpreted as 'fortitude' or 'blessedness' instead of as a 'positive overall evaluation of one's life-as-a- whole'. It is especially unclear whether the term is taken as referring to 'overall happiness' or to 'hedonic level of affect'.

Several authors on the subject believe that the word happiness has strong 'affective' connotations. For example Campbell et al. (1975:8) write that 'the opposite of happiness is sadness or depression; whereas the opposite of satisfaction (with life) includes a strong flavor of 'frustration'. They show that questions which use 'happiness' as a key-word are indeed answered somewhat differently from questions using the term 'life-satisfaction'. This difference is especially clear when one compares the responses of very old and very young respondents.

In this line Andrews & Withey (1976:68) classify 'happiness' questions as pertaining to a 'specific aspect of life' (the affective aspect) rather than to 'life-as-a-whole'. I do not think that is correct. Firstly their own study shows that 'happiness' questions correlate quite strongly with other measures of overall satisfaction with life, more strongly in fact with the items referring to affect exclusively (p.92). Secondly, their seven-point 'happiness' question does extremely well in their test of construct validity (p. 204). It may be true that questions using the term 'happiness' associate more with indicators of hedonic level than questions using the term 'life-satisfaction' (Andrews & McKennel, 1980), but this does not mean that these questions do not refer to an 'overall' evaluation of life. Hence I would not reject them all. However, I do not accept all questions that use the term

Exhibit 4/1a

Some direct closed questions on happiness

Ruut Veenhoven

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Conditions of Happiness

Source

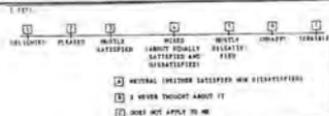
Question

Answer categories

Face validity

Andrews & Withey, 1976:66

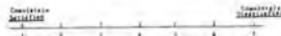
How do you feel about your life as a whole?



++

Andrews & Withey, 1976:67

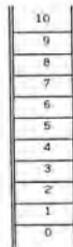
How satisfied are you with your life these days?



++

Cantril, 1965:22/23

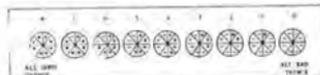
Here is a picture of a ladder. Suppose that we say the top of the ladder represents the best possible life for you and the bottom represents the worst possible life for you. Where on the ladder do you feel you personally stand at the present time?



++

Andrews & Withey, 1976:66

Here are some circles that we can imagine to represent the lives of different people. Circle eight has all plusses in it, to represent a person who has all good things in life. Circle zero has all bad things in life. Other circles are in between.



++

Which circle do you think comes closest to matching your life?

Ruut Veenhoven

69

Conditions of Happiness

Andrews & Withey, 1976:68	How do you feel how happy you are?	delighted terrible (see first question in this exhibit)	+
Gurin et al., 1960:411	Taking all things together, how would you say things are these days? Would you say that you are	very happy/pretty happy/not too happy	+
Gubrium, 1974:109	All in all, how much unhappiness would you say you find in life today? Would you say	almost none/some unhappiness/great happiness	+
<hr/>			
Fellows, 1956:231	Comparing yourself with others of about the same age, are you	much happier less happy (5-point rating scale)	-
Lebo, 1953:386	How do you feel about your life now as compared with your life before the age of 60?	happier/about the same/unhappier	-
Neugarten et al., 1961:141	My life could be happier than it is now	agree/disagree	-
Neugarten et al., 1961:141	In spite of what most people say, the lot of the average gets worse, not better	agree/disagree	-

happiness either. Isager's question for example refers implicitly to a rather variable state of mind. He asks his respondents whether they are 'mostly' happy. As a result the question is more likely to be interpreted as referring to one's mood level rather than to a stable attitude to one's life.

So far I have spoken about the English word 'happiness'. Equivalents of that term in other languages may be less open to confusion with hedonic level. In the Dutch language for example the word 'geluk' evokes hardly any responses in terms of emotions (Schagen, 1970:31). Consequently the above mentioned questions about 'happiness' and 'satisfaction-with-life' do not produce differences when translated into Dutch (Pommer & Van Praag, 1978:17), only high-educated respondents would perceive the distinction (Sikkel, 1981:20). However, in the Philippines a term like 'happiness' was shown to yield more affectively tinged responses than an equivalent of the word 'life-satisfaction' (Bulatao, 1973:237).

Another possible difference between the words 'happiness' and 'life-satisfaction' may be that the former triggers more 'private' judgements and the latter more 'public ones'. Bulatao (1973:237) suggests that the Philippino equivalents do so. Questions using a word like 'happiness' would elicit answers that refer to 'personal predilections for enjoyment' and 'personal fears', while questions about 'life-satisfaction' would rather reflect assessments of oneself against the success goals and achievement stereotypes appropriate to one's age and sex as defined by society". Bulatao expected these latter measures to be more stable and more likely to change with status transition. As yet there is no convincing evidence for either of these claims. The repeat reliability of the two types of questions has not been compared, and findings about their sensitivity for matters of social status are contradictory. Several studies which used both questions observed almost identical correlations with 'income' and 'education' (e.g. Snyder & Spreitzer, 1974:32, European Commission 1975:139/153), while McKennel (1978:400) rather found 'happiness' items to be slightly more linked to these variables.

One more potential difference is that questions using the word 'happiness' are less likely to be responded to positively by people who are resigned to their fate, but who do not really enjoy life. Campbell et al. (1975:489) suggest so on the basis of their finding that their youngest respondents seem more 'happy' than 'satisfied' and their oldest respondents more 'satisfied' than 'happy'. This difference with age also appears in a study on behalf of the European Commission (1975:138/158). It does not appear in all the EC-countries however. Neither do such differences appear in the studies of Snyder & Spreitzer (1974:32) in the US and the one of Bulatao (1973:232) in the

Philippines. There is no further evidence for a possible resignation emphasis in questions on life-satisfaction.

All in all, I do not feel that questions which use the term 'happiness' should categorically be rejected. Insofar as no other defects were involved I accepted them. In the exhibit they are marked with '+'. Where wording and answer formats came too close to hedonic level I categorized them as 'composite' measures. As such we will meet again with them in section 4/4.

Finally the questions in the upper category of the exhibit. I do not see note-worthy objections against any. Hence I marked all with '++'.

Rating scales. As shown in exhibit 4/ 1a, questions not only differ in wording, but also in the answer categories they provide. Most investigators use verbally labeled categories such as 'very satisfied', 'fairly satisfied' and 'not satisfied'. The respondent is required to mark the one that fits best. Sometimes the rating-scale consists of a line of which only the extremes are verbally labeled, for example, as 'very happy' and 'very unhappy'. The respondent then rates his happiness by placing a mark somewhere in between. Another difference is the number of answer categories. Some rating-scales allow only two answers (for example 'happy' or 'unhappy'), but there are also scales that require a rating between zero and one hundred (for example Uhes & David, 1971:846). There is some discussion concerning the question which rating scales are most appropriate.

Length. One aspect of this discussion is the number of the answer categories. Andrews & Withey (1976:19/20) argued that the much used three-step scales do not discriminate sufficiently and that 7- or 9- point scales are to be preferred. They advance two arguments:

The first is that people are capable of making finer judgements. Referring to Miller (1956), Andrews & Withey claim that a seven category division is about as fine a discrimination as most people make in various judgemental tasks. There is indeed evidence that people tend to distinguish between more than three levels of happiness. Analysing free response questions about happiness I got the impression that my respondents thought in terms of six levels (Veenhoven, in preparation).

The second argument holds that longer scales are to be preferred from a purely statistical point of view: an even-step scale capturing more variance than a three-step one does. This latter argument cannot settle the matter,

however. If people in fact use fewer categories, such detailed rating-scales would suggest differences that do not exist.

Symmetry. Positive characterizations of life being more frequent than negative ones, most rating-scales provide more answer categories of the former kind than of the latter: for instance, 'very happy, pretty happy, not too happy' instead of 'happy, neutral, unhappy'. Sikkel (1983:19/22) inspected whether such a symmetric rating-scales yield different responses than asymmetric ones and whether these differences affect correlations with other variables. He observed a better spread of responses on the asymmetric scales but no noticeable differences in correlations.

Spread. Scales that yield scores that are well and symmetrically spread in the population are generally preferred to scales that do not. This is why Andrews & Withey (1976:207/210) tried to find out which rating-scale spreads best. They compared the scores the same respondents gave on two nine-step scales and three seven-step ones. The two nine-step scales fitted their demands best, respectively the 'ladder' scale and the 'circles' scale. (Both presented on exhibit 4/1a). The 'delight-terrible' scale appeared to be second best. (Also presented in exhibit 4/1 a). The responses on the 'satisfaction' scale and the 'faces' scale were least spread. (Presented on respectively exhibit 4/1a and 4/4a). Though preferable from a statistical point of view, scales which yield the most spread and symmetrical distributions do not necessarily provide the most valid results. It is quite possible that of a given population most people are equally satisfied with life or that there are far more happy people than unhappy ones. After all, the appropriateness of rating-scales must be judged on their correspondence with reality rather than with a statistical ideal.

Labeling. A further topic in the discussion is whether all categories should be labelled or whether only the top and the bottom of the scale should be defined. It is argued that the latter type of scale is easier to handle and that it reduces the problems inherent in different connotations of words. Andrews & Withey (1976:211) are of a different opinion. They argue that unlabelled categories allow less precision, both for the respondent and for the investigator. The discussion is not over yet.

Anchoring. A further question is how the extremes of the rating-scale should be defined: whether some generally agreed standard should be suggested or whether the top and the bottom of the scale should be defined in terms of

the individual's own experience. Most scales use the former method. Characteristically the extremes are defined in terms such as 'very satisfied' and 'completely dissatisfied'. Kilpatrick & Cantril (1960:159) followed the latter approach. They began by asking the respondent to describe the very best way of life for him. Then they asked what he felt to be the worst possible life. Subsequently the respondent was shown a ten-step ladder-like rating scale. (Presented in exhibit 4/1a) He was asked to imagine that the top of that scale represents the best life as he had just described and the bottom the worst. The interviewer then asked: "Where on this ladder would you feel you personally stand at the present time?" Kilpatrick & Cantril believe that such a method more validly represents the unique perception of the happiness-unhappiness continuum the individual has in mind. They are probably right in that. The reader may remember section 3/3b, where I argued that the perception of the happiness-unhappiness range may differ slightly between people and that this hinders the comparison of happiness scores. Unfortunately that hindrance is enhanced rather than reduced by the use of such 'self-anchoring' rating-scales. Self-definition of extremes does not encourage people to translate their appreciation of life into the terms of a common standard.

Verbal vs pictorial. A final question of interest is whether verbal category labels are to be preferred to pictorial ones. Pictorial scales such as the 'faces-scale' (See exhibit 4/4a) may be easier to handle for uneducated respondents. They also focus attention on experiential appreciation. On the other hand questions on happiness which are rated on such a scale could easily tap hedonic level rather than overall happiness. Hence I marked questions rated on it as 'composites'. As such they will be discussed in section 4/4.

All in all I see no reason to reject any of the considered rating-scales.

Temporal context. Present happiness is not always identical with perceived former happiness or with expected future happiness. Hence questions must make it clear to which phase in life they apply. The questions in exhibit 4/1a all refer to present evaluations of life. Some do so explicitly, but not all. Though explicitness is to be preferred, questions of the latter kind can nevertheless be accepted, if they figure in an interview which does not focus on another phase.

There are also investigators who asked their respondents to rate happiness at various points in time. The first to do so was Kuhlen (1948). He confronted

Exhibit 4/1b
The life-satisfaction Chart

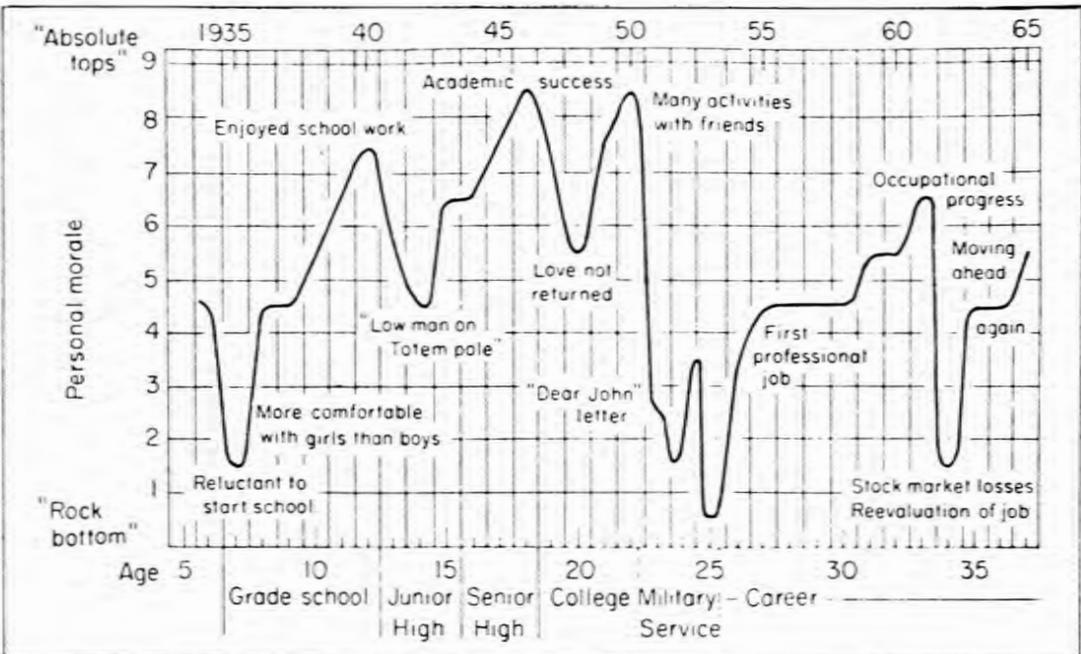


Figure 1. Example of a Life Satisfaction Chart [1, p. 510].

his respondents with a graph. One axis of this graph represented their level of happiness and the other axis their age. The respondents were required to draw a line representing their happiness at different stages of life; the happiness they remembered from younger age, the happiness they were experiencing now and the happiness they expected at older ages. From these pictures Kuhlen could draw a lot of information. Information about levels of happiness at various ages, about patterns of growth and decline, about the stability of happiness through time, about expectations on happiness and last but not least about the present level of happiness. Variants of this method are the 'Life-graph' proposed by Back & Bourgue (1970:255) and the 'Life-satisfaction Chart' in exhibit 4/1 b. An advantage of this method is that it leaves no doubt about the temporal context of the responses.

Number of questions. The first empirical investigations on happiness used lengthy questionnaires. These so-called 'Morale scales' sometimes contained more than a hundred items. (Rundquist & Sletto, 1936; Cavan et al., 1949). Gradually these lists were shortened and nowadays a single question suffices for most investigators. Still there are several reluctant ones, who believe that so difficult a subject as happiness cannot be measured with only one question.

I do not object to measuring happiness by means of multiple direct questions, though I do not see great advantages either. It may add to the reliability insofar as it levels off the effects of occasional misunderstandings and contextual bias. However, it hardly contributes to validity. Two valid questions do not yield more valid information than one single valid question does. Neither is a sum score of several invalid questions about happiness less invalid an indicator than one such question apart. The use of multiple questions is better suited to some methods of indirect questioning. (To be discussed in section 4/ 1.2). As far as direct questioning is concerned its use has been rather detrimental to the validity of happiness indicators. Most sum scores of direct questions that have been used contain at least one item that is unacceptable (e.g. Brophy, 1959:283; Wilson, 1960:157; Kammann, 1979:5). In fact I know of only one composite score of overall happiness that is acceptable. This is Andrews & Withey's (1976:66) sum score of the ratings made on an identical question posed twice during the interview.

b. Open questions.

Direct questioning does not necessarily involve multiple choice response. Free

response answers are possible as well. Surprisingly hardly any investigation has used the method. I know of only two.

The first is an investigation by Watson (1930:81). Watson asked his subjects: 'Now write in your own words a sentence or two which you believe will most truly describe your own general happiness in life'. Unfortunately this question was preceded by several other ones, which were just beside the point. The use of the word 'happiness' is not an advantage either. Yet the question is not incorrect. Hence I accepted it.

A second investigation is one by myself (Veenhoven: in preparation). My respondents completed a questionnaire containing 46 questions of the sentence completion type. The questions dealt with their major goals, hopes and evaluations and were ordered in a life history pattern. Typical items were: 'A life like mine ... ' and 'Life is ... '. The responses to these questions were subjected to a content analysis. Only the statements that clearly referred to an overall evaluation of the respondent's life-as-a-whole were taken into account. (Most respondents in my sample made several such statements, some made only one statement on the matter and a few none). All statements on happiness were rated for positiveness. When respondents made more than one statement the rater estimated an average. My report discusses in detail the pros and cons of this method. Here it will suffice to note that this method is likely to yield valid results albeit at the cost of completeness.

Obviously there are more ways to frame open questions. For example, one could ask the respondent to write an essay on his satisfaction with life through the years, or invite him to write down what crops up in his mind when asked to give an account of his life.

Open-ended questions have several advantages: a.o. a better check on whether the respondent is really talking about happiness. On the other hand open questioning requires that the responses are analyzed afterwards. This means not only a lot of work, but also a source of bias. The validity of free response questions does not only depend on their wording. More important still is the specificity of the instructions for content analysis. This is why such instructions must always be reported in detail.

c. Focused interview

So far we dealt with separate questions, which figure rather isolatedly in interviews or in questionnaires. A related approach is that of the focused

interview: a structured talk in which the matter is repeatedly touched on from different angles. If such an interview aims especially at looking behind the individual's defences, we speak of a 'depth interview'. Several investigators tried to assess happiness in this way. All seem to have covered not only overall happiness but one or more of its components as well. Hence these indicators will be discussed in section 4/4c.

4/1.2 INDIRECT QUESTIONS

Many investigators tried to interrogate their respondents indirectly. They did not ask about the respondent's evaluation of life as such, but rather about things they thought to be implicit in happiness or unhappiness. Probably they preferred this roundabout because they feared that direct questions would give rise to defensive denial and social desirability effects. Three variants of this method can be mentioned:

a. Summed life-aspect satisfactions

The most direct variant is the method of asking people about their satisfaction with various specific aspects of life and then computing an average. Several investigators have done so, e.g. Weitz (1952), Gadourek (1963), Rodgers & Converse (1975) and Huisman & Siegerist (1974). The questions of the latter are presented in exhibit 4/ 1.2a at the top. All these investigators seem to believe that people answer questions concerning the details of their life more honestly than those about their life-as-a-whole and that overall evaluations correspond with the sum of detail appraisals. Later studies have indeed shown high correlations between summed life-aspect appreciations and responses to direct questions about global happiness. (e.g. Andrews & Withey, 1976:244; Michalos, 1983:232). Yet the following objections must be mentioned:

Firstly happiness concerns 'life-as-a-whole'. Hence a few aspect ratings cannot be taken to represent it. People may be aware of far more aspects than those touched on by the investigator. For example: a person may be quite unhappy because he experiences great problems in the realms of 'religion' and 'politics'. If he is questioned only about his satisfaction with 'finance', 'work' and 'marriage' he may nevertheless appear as a happy person.

A second point is that happiness involves a judgement by the subject himself. It is the subject who brings the pieces together, who selects and sets

Exhibit 4/1.2a

Two summed life-aspect-ratings.

<i>source</i>	<i>questions</i>	<i>answer categories</i>	<i>computation</i>	<i>face validity</i>
Huisman & Siegerist 1974:188 (General Satisfaction)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Considering your home, would you say you are: 2. Considering your financial situation, would you say you are: 3. Considering your education would you say you have the education you had wanted? 4. Considering your opportunities to get ahead in life do you judge them: 5. Considering your health, would you judge this: 	<p>very satisfied/rather/not very satisfied/rather/not</p> <p>yes/at about/no</p> <p>sufficient/not too good/ insufficient</p> <p>good/not too good/bad</p>	Average	—
Campbell et al. 1976: (Semantic Differential Happiness Scale)	Here are some words and phrases which we would like you to use to describe how you feel about your present life. For example, if you think your present life is very boring, put an X in the box right next to the word 'boring'. If you think it is very interesting, put an X in the box right next to the word 'interesting'. If you think it is somewhere in between, put an X where you think it belongs. Put an X in one box on every line.	<p>Boring Interesting</p> <p>Miserable Enjoyable</p> <p>Hard Easy</p> <p>Useless Worthwhile</p> <p>Lonely Friendly</p> <p>Empty Full</p> <p>Discouraging Hopeful</p> <p>Tied-down Free</p> <p>Disappointing Rewarding</p> <p>Doesn't give Brings out</p> <p>me much the best in</p> <p>chance me</p>	Means were calculated by assigning the value 1 to the least favorable response, 7 to the most favorable and 2-6 to intervening responses.	—

priorities. Here the investigator takes his place and arbitrarily decides that all aspects have an equal weight.

In order to cope with this problem some investigators gave different weights to the various life-aspect-satisfactions. People were first asked to rate the importance of some life-aspects and then to indicate their satisfaction with them. In the sum score the aspects rated as more important were then given more weight. See Goldings (1954:35), Campbell et. al. (1976:85) and Andrews & Withey (1976:118, 242/244). Surprisingly these weighted sum scores do not predict self-rated happiness any better than the unweighted ones. This may mean that overall evaluations of life are indeed based on a rough average of life-aspect-satisfactions, but it can also imply that the consciously perceived importance of life-aspects does not fully correspond with the importance actually attached to it in making up the balance of life.

A third objection is that the significance of life-aspects is highly variable through time and culture. For example 'marriage' is currently considered as one of the most important things in life: hence 'satisfaction with marriage' figures in all sum scores. Marriage has not always been that important however. Twenty years ago in the Netherlands, marital satisfaction was less strongly related to overall happiness than it is now (Veenhoven, 1983:56). Therefore this item does not allow comparison of happiness through time. The same applies to satisfaction with 'income' and 'work'. The importance of these aspects of life not only varies with time, but also with culture. Not all cultures value 'work' as much as we do. Hence summed life-aspect-satisfactions do not allow comparison of happiness between cultures either.

Finally a fourth objection is that not all aspect-evaluations, people are asked about, do necessarily apply. Some people are not married and hence cannot express 'satisfaction with marriage'. If asked instead about their satisfaction with their unmarried state, an essentially different phenomenon is tapped. Similarly not everyone has an 'income' or 'work' If these people are allowed to skip these questions, their sum scores are no longer comparable with the scores of those who have.

Most of these methods are based on summed life domain-satisfactions. They refer to satisfaction in the realms of 'marriage', 'work' and 'politics'. A variant of this method works with criterion-satisfactions. The respondent is now asked to rate his life-as-a-whole by means of distinct criteria such as 'social success', 'variety' and 'purpose-fulness'. Here again these ratings are then combined in a sumscore. See e.g. Andrews & Withey (1976:234). The so-called *semantic differential happiness scales* are essentially of the same kind.

These measures also consist of summed 'criterion' evaluations of life. Characteristically life is rated in terms of 'warm-cold', 'boring-interesting' and 'useless-worthwhile'. An example is presented in exhibit 4/2.1a at the bottom. As all the above objections apply here as well, these methods are not acceptable either.

b. Questions on health, zest, plans, etc.

A more indirect approach is to question the individual about matters that are essentially distinct from life-satisfaction, but that are probably related to it. Several such questions are presented in exhibit 4/ 1.2b. I consider them all as invalid, because the phenomena tapped do not necessarily imply happiness or unhappiness. All deal with matters that are more or less related to happiness, but all imperfectly and conditionally. People who are 'energetic' are for example not always happy. Though a strong statistical relationship exists, this relationship is not equally strong in all age-groups. (See section 7/1.4 for more detail). 'Goal-orientedness' does not imply happiness either. In fact it has appeared to be slightly negatively related to it (Veenhoven, in preparation). Again the relationship between goal-orientation and happiness is not as strong in all groups. Similar objections apply to all further items in the exhibit.

All these questions are part of larger 'morale scales', which were mostly constructed on the basis of elaborate statistical testing. That does not render them any more valid however. Firstly the fact that an invalid question figures in a longer list doesn't render that question less invalid. Secondly, the sum of many invalid questions is obviously not less invalid an indicator than one invalid question is. Such a sum score remains invalid even if the list has a high statistical construct validity. Internal statistical consistency does not guarantee that a specific concept is measured. When, for example, 'education of parents' is included in an intelligence test, this item will behave consistently as well. However, it obviously does not represent intelligence as such, but rather a determinant of it. The common variance in morale scales seems to derive largely from shared relations to factors such as 'mental health' and 'social adjustment'. However, it is essentially unclear what these summed indirect questions really represent. It is really to be regretted that so much effort has been wasted on them!

Exhibit 4/1.2b

Some indirect questions used to assess happiness.

<i>author</i>	<i>question</i>	<i>answer categories</i>	<i>face validity</i>
Cavan et al.1949:117	My life is full of worry,	agree / disagree	—
Neugarten et al. 1961:141	I have made plans for the things I'll be doing a month or a year from now.	agree/ disagree	—
Lowenthal & Boler, 1965:367	Do you find that you are less interested lately in personal appearance, table manners and things like that?	yes/no	—
Kutner et al., 1956:290	How often do you feel there is just no point in living?	often / sometimes / hardly ever	—
Cumming& Henry, 1961:132	What age would you most like to be?	Credit of 1 given for a statement of satisfaction with the present age.	—

c. Projective tests.

A last way to infer happiness indirectly is to record people's fantasies or associations and then check these for indications of (un)happiness. A possible advantage of such an approach is that it may bypass social and psychological defenses. As such it might solve one of the most feared validity problems. On the other hand the method has several rather evident drawbacks. Identifying 'projections' is quite a hazardous job. Moreover, it is not certain that happy people always make elated projections, and unhappy people gloomy ones. In the following discussion on peer ratings (section 4/1.3), it will appear that the projection process is more complicated than that.

There are several projective techniques. Two classic ones are the 'Rorschach' method and the 'Thematic Apperception Test'. The former involves the interpretation of inkblots. The subject is asked to mention the things he 'sees' in them. The latter method works with a series of pictures. The subject is invited to write a story about what happens in those. Both methods have been used for the purpose of measuring happiness.

Rorschach-indices of happiness were proposed by Mukerji (1969:528). She operationalized happiness as the 'ratio of unpleasant and pleasant affect in a record'. 'Hostility', 'anxiety', 'dependency' and 'bodily preoccupied responses' were taken as 'unpleasant' and 'positive' and 'neutral' responses as 'pleasant'. This operationalization does not quite cover Mukerji's own formal definition of happiness. Neither does it concur with mine. Scores thus obtained probably reflect momentary hedonic level rather than overall happiness.

Wessman & Ricks (1966:120) report an attempt to assess happiness by means of the Thematic Apperception Test. Themes and outcomes of stories were rated for fifteen aspects expected to be indicative of happiness-unhappiness. Wessman & Ricks only mention the three aspects they consider most successful: 'guilt', 'guilt-relief' and 'helplessness'. These are clearly different things than what is called 'happiness' here. No wonder these ratings appeared only moderately related to self-ratings of hedonic level.

So far these two attempts to measure happiness projectively were not successful. It is unlikely that the concept involved here can ever be satisfactorily measured by means of this method.

4/1.3 RATING BY OTHERS

A quite different way of assessing happiness is to follow people in their daily routine. In a real-life setting people may be more honest and open than in the rather artificial setting of an interview. As far as I know, no investigator did observe people for that purpose in their daily life for any length of time. However, several used the subject's friends as a source of information on the matter. Typically the respondent is asked to mention some friends who really know him and these friends are then asked to rate the respondent's happiness.

Investigations of this kind were performed by Hartman (1934) and Irwin et al. (1979). The correlations between peer-ratings and self-ratings appeared modest. Hartman (p.209) found a correlation of +.34 and Irwin (p.11) a correlation of +.27. The correlations between ratings made by different friends appeared to be low as well. In Hartman's investigation it was +.42 (p. 209) and in Irwin's +.30 (p.11). Finally the retest reliability of peer ratings appeared to be considerably lower than that of self-ratings (Hartman, p. 209). There are several reasons for these disappointing outcomes.

Firstly there is the above mentioned fact that happiness cannot be inferred from observations of overt behavior. Happy people do not necessarily behave happily. Hence a friend can rate the subject's happiness only if the subject has told him about it: directly or indirectly. If not instructed to focus on such verbal utterances exclusively, peers probably base their ratings on assessment of the subject's conditions of life. Rather than rating the subject's own appreciation of life they will then rate how happy they think they themselves would be in his shoes. Unfortunately, none of these investigations involved sufficiently clear instructions. If they had, there would still be the problem that untrained raters may fail to follow instructions correctly.

A second drawback with peer-ratings is that people often take care not to manifest feelings of unhappiness outwardly. As noted earlier, there are social pressures to appear happy. These pressures are probably stronger in 'real life' than in the protected context of a scientific interview. Consequently both Watson (1930:108) and Goldings (1954:39) found that people tend to be more honest with an investigator than with their peers.

Thirdly there is the problem that attributions of other people's happiness are not independent from one's own happiness. This phenomenon was already noted as a minor source of interviewer bias. (Section 3/ 2a). There is reason to expect greater bias when the ratings are made by untrained peers. Irwin et al. (1979:11) found that peer-ratings correspond more closely with

the rater's own happiness than with the self-ratings of the subjects. This kind of projection is called *complementary-projection*. Sometimes the projective process works out differently: Goldings (1954:42) found that only the 'moderately happy' tend to attribute their own level of happiness to others. 'Very happy' and 'very unhappy' subjects in this sample tended to *contrast projection*. The 'very happy' rated faces on photographs as less happy than themselves, whereas the 'very unhappy' rated these same faces characteristically as more happy.

The obvious outcome of all this is that happiness is better not be measured by peer-ratings. Even where sufficient instructions are provided the method remains dubious. Therefore I decided not to accept indicators of this kind.

4/2 INDICATORS OF HEDONIC LEVEL OF AFFECT

Hedonic level of affect was defined as the degree to which affective experience is dominated by pleasantness. The definition did not include subjective awareness of this state of mind.

Measuring hedonic level is in some respects less difficult than measuring overall happiness. Firstly it can be estimated better on the basis of observed non-verbal behavior. Hedonic affect is characteristically accompanied by cheerful facial expressions, typical tones of voice and characteristic bodily movements. Secondly its measurement is not complicated by the difficulty of singling out people who have no opinion on the matter. Everybody experiences hedonic affect, whether fully aware of or not.

On the other hand, measurement of hedonic level involves some special complications. Firstly it requires a greater precision with respect to the timeframe of observations. The average level of affect during the previous month may be different from the average level during the previous week, or during the last five years. Hedonic level represents the flow of experience; as such it is more likely to change with time than attitudinal phenomena as 'overall happiness' and 'contentment'. Secondly hedonic level is an average of experiences. Therefore it can never be completely measured. We cannot record pleasantness at every moment. Average pleasantness can at best be estimated; either on the basis of repeated observations by an investigator, or by means of estimates made by the individual himself.

Various methods for assessing hedonic level have been suggested. Most suggestions came from psychologists who were interested in 'moods'. (E.g.

Morgan et al., 1919; Flügel, 1925; Bousfield & Barry, 1937; Wessman & Ricks, 1966). Furthermore there are also suggestions from the side of investigators who aimed at 'happiness', but who did not distinguish between 'overall happiness' and 'hedonic level'. (E.g. Wilson, 1965; Bradburn, 1969).

As in the case of overall happiness three main methods are being used, methods based on *direct* questions, methods using *indirect* questions and methods working with *ratings by others*. I will again present some examples of each of these variants and discuss their face validity.

4/2.1 DIRECT QUESTIONS

There are two ways of asking a person about his average hedonic level. A first is to ask him how well he thinks he 'generally' feels. A second is to ask him repeatedly how well he feels 'right now' and then compute an average. Both kinds of direct questions can be presented in a closed or in an open cast and can be administered by means of a questionnaire or an interview.

a. Questions on how one generally feels

The first method is used most frequently. Typically the respondent is asked to indicate what mood level is most characteristic for him. Sometimes he is asked to indicate his characteristic mood of the 'last few days', sometimes the timeframe is defined as 'the last month' and sometimes the individual is simply asked to rate his mood 'in general'. Examples of questions of that kind can be found in exhibit 4/2.1a. Some investigators use several such questions and add up the responses in a sum score. For example Brenner does so with the three questions shown in the exhibit. There are three objections to asking the respondent to estimate his 'average' level of affect.

Firstly, one is not always sure that the respondent has an opinion on the matter. Though everybody experiences pleasant and unpleasant affects, not every body knows which experience is generally dominant. In particular, many people have no opinion on how they generally feel at specific times during the day or days of the week. Hence Cason's questions (presented in the exhibit) seem to require more specificity than there is in the minds of his respondents. As a result they may tap his stereotypes rather than the reality of his experiences.

Secondly, even if the respondent has an opinion on how he feels generally,

Exhibit 4/2.1a**Some direct questions on perceived general hedonic level of affect.**

<i>source</i>	<i>question</i>	<i>answer categories</i>	<i>face validity</i>
Fowler & McCalla, 1969:733	In general how would you say your spirits are these days?	excellent very good fair poor	+
Brenner, 1970:58	In general how would you say you feel most of the time?	very good spirits fairly good spirits neither good spirits nor low spirits fairly low spirits very low spirits	+
Cameron et al. 1971:661	How would you describe your general mood?	happy neutral sad	+
Cason, 1931:135	Daily feeling score: (average score) If +5 represents the best anyone can feel, -5 the worst anyone can feel, and 0 the approximate average feelings of the whole population, how would you grade your own most customary and representative feelings at different times during the day? Place a single number as -2, +3 or +1 before each of the following: first half hour after getting up first half of the morning (excluding the rust half hour) last half of the morning rust half of the afternoon last half of the afternoon first half of the evening		—

Exhibit 4/1.2b

Some indirect questions used to assess happiness.

<i>author</i>	<i>question</i>	<i>answer categories</i>	<i>face validity</i>
Cavan et al.1949:117	My life is full of worry.	agree / disagree	—
Neugarten et al. 1961:141	I have made plans for the things I'll be doing a month or a year from now.	agree/ disagree	—
Lowenthal & Boler, 1965:367	Do you find that you are less interested lately in personal appearance, table manners and things like that?	yes/no	—
Kutner et al., 1956:290	How often do you feel there is just no point in living?	often / sometimes / hardly ever	—
Cumming& Henry, 1961:132	What age would you most like to be?	Credit of 1 given for a statement of satisfaction with the present age.	—

this opinion is not necessarily correct. Memory may be biased. Unlike overall happiness such perceptual peculiarities are not included in the concept.

A third problem is that questions of this kind tend to tap overall happiness rather than hedonic level of affect. This is especially true of questions using the term 'happiness'; e.g. Wilson's question. Also, Brenner's question on 'enjoyment of life' can easily tap overall happiness instead of the 'quality of affect' he aims at. To cope with this problem the key-words used should clearly refer to affective functioning. It would be advisable to ask the respondent explicitly to disregard matters of 'contentment' and to focus on 'emotional' experience exclusively.

Yet these objections do not seem too serious; especially not the latter one. It is moreover not ascertained to what extent they actually apply. Provided that item content caused no problems, I accepted most of these questions. Only a few were rejected for specific reasons.

Cason's 'Average Feeling Score' is one of these. See again exhibit 4/ 2.1a. Alongside the above-mentioned objection that this instrument includes too specific questions, it must be noted as having two further defects. The first of these is that Cason asks the respondent to compare his feeling with 'the average feelings of the whole population'. The respondent cannot know how the whole population feels, especially not how the whole population feels 'during the first half hour after getting up'. The second defect is that Cason's average feeling score gives equal weights to daily, weekly and yearly averages. People may in fact give different weights to these matters or may not make such computation at all when estimating their general hedonic level.

Wilson's 'Elation Score' was rejected as well. One of its items also involves a comparison with other people and two items refer to traits that are not of the same stuff as hedonic level ('light-hearted' and 'happy-go-lucky').

Direct questions on how one generally feels are a common element in several currently used personality inventories: e.g. in 'depression tests', in 'mental health ratings' and in the earlier mentioned 'morale scales'. Yet all these inventories cover a broader phenomenon than hedonic level and therefore cannot be accepted as its indicator.

Open questions. Attempts to assess perceived hedonic level by means of open-ended questions are less frequent. The only example I know of is my own investigation. My earlier mentioned sentence completion questionnaire on life-goals and well-being contains several items that ask the respondent how

he feels most of the time. Typical items are: 'I usually feel ' and 'When I consider how contented I ought to be and how often I really feel happy (Veenhoven, in preparation).

Focused interview. As in the case of overall happiness, hedonic level can also be assessed by means of focused interviewing. This has the advantage of offering more opportunity for explaining what hedonic level is and to check that the respondent is not talking about something else. More over this method is suited to several 'depth' techniques, which may reveal repressed negative feelings.

On the other hand, there are several drawbacks; the subject's responses may be socially biased as a result of desirability effects that are evoked in the face-to-face situation and the interviewer's records may be biased by his private theories. These problems will be discussed in more detail in section 4/4 c. It will appear that they require again clear instructions for both interviewing and content-analysis.

I know of only one investigation which tried to assess hedonic level in this way. This is an investigation of Neugarten et al. (1961: 138). These investigators assessed what they call general 'mood tone', on the basis of the content-analysis of extensive interview records. Their rater instructions are quite specific. Yet closer reading shows that the content-analysis in fact covered more than 'mood tone': it also covered more cognitive appraisals of life. Hence I classified this indicator as a 'composite'. As such we will meet it again in section 4/4.

b. Repeated questions on the mood of the moment

The other method of direct questioning is asking the respondent how he feels 'right now' rather than 'generally '. Several investigators did so. Some of the questions they used are presented in exhibit 4/2.1b.

A person who claims to feel depressed right now is more likely to feel depressed in general than a person who claims to feel elated at the moment of the interview. Yet one single observation of this kind cannot indicate the general hedonic level reliably. A generally depressed person may accidentally feel good at the time of the interview. Hence most investigators deemed repeated questioning necessary. Flugel (1925) asked his subjects to rate the pleasantness in the affects they experienced every waking hour during 30 days. On the basis of these records he computed an average. Likewise, Wessman

Exhibit 4/2.1b

Some direct questions on momentaneous hedonic level of affect

<i>author</i>	<i>question</i>	<i>answer categories</i>	<i>face * validity</i>
Cameron, 1975: 218	How would you characterize your mood or impulse of the last instant?	happy neutral sad	++
Cameron, 1975: 217	How would you characterize your mood of the last half hour?	happy neutral sad	++
Wessman & Ricks, 1966:273	How elated or depressed, happy or unhappy you felt to-day? (‘Elation-Depression Score’; last item in the ‘Personal Feeling Scale’, fully presented in exhibit 4/2.2)	1. Complete elation, rapturous joy and soaring ecstasy. 2. Very elated and in very high spirits. Tremendous delight and buoyancy. 3. Elated and in high spirits. 4. Feeling very good and cheerful. 5. Feeling pretty good, ‘O.K.’ 6. Feeling a little bit low. Just so-so. 7. Spirits low and somewhat ‘blue’. 8. Depressed and feeling very low. Definitely ‘blue’. 9. Tremendously depressed. Feeling terrible, miserable, ‘just awful’. 10. Utter depression and gloom. Completely down. All is black and leaden. Wish it were all over.	++
Young, 1937:313	Consider your experience during the last 24 hours, being as objective and matter of fact as possible. Estimate honestly the prevailing or dominant level of your mood.	Highly elated extremely gloomy (7-point scale)	++

* If asked only once these questions cannot reliably indicate the **general** hedonic level. Such questions should be repeated several times during a period of at least a month.

& Ricks (1966) asked their respondents to record the average hedonic level of the day, every night before retiring. They did so during a period of six weeks.

Studies of this kind demonstrated that there are great differences in the average level of affect. Some people feel consistently depressed, while some feel generally fine. People also differ with respect to the fluctuations in their hedonic level. This variability appeared unrelated to average level of affect as such (Wessman & Ricks, 1966:244). Contrary to current belief there is no cyclical pattern in the succession of depressive and elated moods (Fordyce, 1972:151/153).

This method of repeated questioning on the mood of the moment is a very laborious one. As such it is unsuited to large scales surveys. However, it promises the best results. It does not have the disadvantages of questioning about general feelings (as mentioned above), nor does it have the drawbacks of indirect questioning and external ratings to be discussed below. Provided the questions were correctly formulated, I accepted all indicators of this kind.

4/2.2 INDIRECT QUESTIONS

There are several ways to ask someone about this hedonic level indirectly. One is to ask about pleasantness in a few specific affects rather than asking straightforward about the general hedonic level. Still more indirect are the methods that infer hedonic level from the answers to questions about essentially different things.

a. **Summed specific affects**

The methods discussed so far require that the respondent estimates the average pleasantness of his various affective experiences: his various feelings, his emotions and his moods. This estimate involves a considerable degree of abstraction. Many people may find this difficult. Hence this requirement is a potential source of bias. This is probably one of the reasons why several investigators opted to focus on hedonic level in specific affects.

Wessman & Ricks for example confront their respondents with ten questions about 'Personal Feelings', each of which concerns pleasantness in a specific field of affective experience. These questions are presented in exhibit 4/2.2. The average score is taken to represent hedonic level. Similar methods were used by Zerssen et al. (1970) and by Stanfiel et al. (1971).

Exhibit 4/2.2**Some sets of questions on hedonic level in specific affects**

<i>author</i>	<i>questions</i>	<i>answer categories</i>	<i>computation</i>	<i>face validity</i>
Bradburn, 1969:267	Affect Balance Scale (ABS) During the past few weeks did you ever feel: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. particularly excited or interested in something? 2. so restless that you couldn't sit long in a chair? 3. proud because someone complimented you on something you had done? 4. very lonely or remote from other people? 5. pleased about having accomplished something? 6. bored? 7. on top of the world? 8. depressed or very unhappy? 9. that things were going your way? 10. upset because someone criticised you? 	yes/no yes/no yes/no yes/no yes/no yes/no yes/no yes/no yes/no yes/no	Affirmative answers to the questions 1, 3, 5, 7 and 9 were counted +1, affirmative answers to the questions 2, 4, 6, 8 and 10 were counted -1.	±
Wessman & Ricks, 1966:267/275	Personal Feeling Scale Present day feelings about: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. fullness vs emptiness of life 2. receptivity towards and stimulation by the world 3. social respect vs social contempt 4. personal freedom vs external constraint 5. harmony vs anger 6. own sociability vs withdrawal 7. companionship vs being isolated 8. love and sex 9. present work 10. thought processes 11. tranquility vs anxiety 12. impulse expression vs self-restraint 13. personal moral judgement 14. self-confidence vs feeling of inadequacy 15. energy vs fatigue 16. elation vs depression 	All answers rated on a ten step rating-scale, the steps of which were each labeled verbally. (Rating-scale for question 16 was presented in exhibit 4/2.1b)	Average score	±

The approach of Bradburn is even more simple. Bradburn asked whether or not the respondent experienced each of five positive and five negative feelings during the past few weeks. Bradburn simply added up feelings experienced once. The degree to which positive experiences outweigh the negative ones represented his 'Affect Balance Score' (ABS). His list of questions is also presented in the exhibit.

The problem with these methods is that they assume that a person's affective experience can be representatively sampled in this way. That assumption is implicit, but its tenability has not been demonstrated as yet. In fact there are two points of doubt: firstly whether affective experience at the time of the interview represents hedonic level over a longer period, and secondly whether these few affects can adequately represent the total affective experience.

The first problem can be solved by repeated questioning. Several of the investigators who used the Personal Feeling Scale did so: usually each day for a couple of weeks. However, the Bradburn questions are typically administered only once. Concern about their representativeness for general affect leads at best to a widening of the time-frame; reference to the 'past few weeks' is sometimes changed into 'past few months'.

The second problem - that the questions miss out on important affective experiences - is less easy to solve. An obvious solution would be to increase the number of questions. Hence the list of Stanfiel contains 52 items and Zerssen's 66. However, the variety of affective experience is endless. No list can ever cover all possible experiences. Even if one could at least cover the most relevant aspects of affective experience, there is still the problem of integrating these observations into one indicator of hedonic level. A simple sum score is not satisfactory. Not all affective experiences are equally important, especially not with respect to the hedonic tone they embody. A person may tick off the first item on the Bradburn list because he remembers he felt pleasant about having mown the lawn last Sunday and he may also tick off the last item because he was fired for incompetence on Monday. That person will probably feel depressed, but if he does not tick any other items, his ABS score will nevertheless portray him as a person of average mood.

I do not know of attempts to assess whether there are great differences in sum scores yielded by these different lists. As long as such validation research is missing, these measures must be regarded with scepticism. For the time being I nevertheless accepted them. One of the reasons for doing so is that Bradburn's Affect Balance Score is a very frequently used one. Leaving it out would imply

a great loss of data about hedonic level. By accepting this indicator I bought quantity of information at the cost of quality.

b. Projective measures

In section 4/1.2c I discussed two projective measures claimed to measure 'happiness'. I suggested that they tap 'hedonic level' rather than 'overall happiness'. Actually several investigators used projective techniques for measuring pleasantness of affect.

One such techniques is the word association test of Morgan et al. (1919). Morgan's subjects were asked to close their eyes, listen to a word mentioned by the experimenter and then to report whether the first idea that word called to their mind was 'pleasant', 'neutral' or 'unpleasant'. Five series of fifty words were presented. The ratio of pleasant to unpleasant associations was used as an indicator of 'cheerfulness'. Variants of this methods have been proposed by Baxter (1917), Washburne (1925, 1926) and Young (1937).

A less obtrusive method is to take a literal record of what people say in casual conversation and to inspect these verbal samples for projections of positive affect. An investigation of this kind has been reported by Westbrook (1976). Her report contains detailed scoring instructions, which allowed a high inter-rate reliability ($r = +.93$). This method possibly provides a better picture of real life than laboratory tests do. However, it also suffers from the biases of real life. Conformists are likely to lay more cheerfulness in their words than there is in their mind, especially in situations where the pressure to appear happy is felt strongest.

Though projective measures probably do better in the case of hedonic level than they do for overall happiness, doubts remain nevertheless. One is never sure whether a response represents a projection or a genuine reaction. In particular not with Westbrook's verbal sampling method. A quite cheerful person can be rated as depressed by this method if the silent observer records his words at the moment he is telling a sad story. Further, one is never sure of the way projections work out. As noted earlier not all projections are complementary. Contrast projection may occur as well. Again validation research would be worth while. For the time being I decided not to accept these measures.

4/2.3 RATINGS BY OTHERS

Several investigators tried to by-pass the problem of questioning by inferring the individual's hedonic level on the basis of his facial expression and other non-verbal cues. Some personally observed their subjects and some drew on reports of people who knew them.

a. Ratings based on observations of non-verbal behavior

Many investigations have demonstrated that people consistently interpret certain facial expressions, gestures and tones of voice as indicating pleasant affect. This is most clear for facial expressions. 'Happy' faces are recognized in all cultures; primitive and isolated ones not excepted. (See e.g. Ekman, 1970). Children recognize pleasantness in facial expressions quite young (e.g. La Barbara et al. 1976). Pleasantness of affect is also inferred from gestural cues (Graham et al. 1975) and recognized in the tone of voice (e.g. Bugental & Moore, 1979), irrespective of the language used (Alblas et al. 1976). Compared to other affective qualities pleasantness is relatively easy to recognize non-verbally (e.g. Drag & Shaw, 1974).

All this research concerns ratings of subjects who are asked to act cheerfully (mostly actors). I do not know of investigations in which a naive subject was rated first on the basis of his non-verbal behavior and then asked how he actually felt. I would not be surprised if such investigations showed only meager associations between ratings by others and self-reports. There are three main reasons for this expectation: firstly the cues used in the above-mentioned investigations concern the extremes of affective life rather than its intermediate levels. Intermediate levels of affect are the most normal; yet they probably manifest themselves less obviously in non-verbal behavior. Secondly ordinary people probably show their feelings less openly than hired actors do. They are subject to social pressures and may thus even display feelings they do not really experience. This objection does not apply when babies are judged or when people are observed without their knowledge. In the third place there are the complexities of the attribution process. The feelings people attribute to their fellowmen do not depend on behavioral cues alone. These doubts are nicely confirmed by the results of an investigation reported by Noelle-Neuman (1977:223). This study involved an otherwise traditional interview about aspirations and satisfactions, in which the interviewer also rated the cheerfulness in the respondent's face, movements

and body posture. It is not clear whether he did so before asking about satisfactions or after. Anyway the association with self rated general hedonic level was modest ($G = +31$), especially in the lower social ranks.

If hedonic level is to be assessed using behavioral observation, repeated observations are required. As in the case of questioning for momentary feelings it is risky to confine oneself to one single observation. Noelle-Neuman (1977:226) compared the result of one non-verbal rating with another one several months later. When the same interviewer made the ratings both times, 78 percent of the ratings appeared identical, when different interviewers were involved, agreement dropped to 64 percent; nevertheless a noteworthy consistency.

Morgan (1934) is one of the first investigators who assessed hedonic level by means of non-verbal cues. He wanted to know whether there is any truth in the common contention that experiences of high and low mood tend to follow each other in a regular cyclus. His investigation covered one human subject, an eight months' old baby, which he observed day and night during one week. Laughing and smiling was taken to reflect pleasant affect ('happiness' in Morgan's language), while behaviors like crying and pouting were interpreted as signifying unpleasant affect. Both the intensity and the duration of this behavior were rated. Thus Morgan found that the baby showed behavior patterns indicative of pleasantness during 30 percent of his waking hours. He found no pendulum-like pattern in the succession of pleasantness and unpleasantness. Essentially similar methods were used by Dick (1964, Scale A) among handicapped children and by McGrade (1968) and by Schaefer & Bailey (1963) among babies.

In spite of its obvious defects I have not dropped this method entirely. I decided to accept investigations which apply it to children. The three objections mentioned above apply less to children than to adults. Moreover, there are really no better alternatives for assessing hedonic level in children. Questioning on the matter probably requires more introspection than children have and very small children obviously cannot answer questions at all.

b. Ratings based on both verbal and non-verbal cues

A more simple way to assess an individual's hedonic level is to ask people who know him well how they think he generally feels. Acquaintances can use both verbal and nonverbal behavior as a source of information. They hear the

subjects spontaneous remarks about his feelings and moods and they also see how he acts in real life situations. *Peer-ratings* of 'cheerfulness' were gathered by Webb (1915), Baxter (1917), Morgan et al. (1919) and Washburn et al. (1925, 1926). As may be remembered from the foregoing paragraph peer ratings meant to indicate 'happiness' have probably also tapped hedonic level. Hedonic level was also assessed by means of estimates by *teachers, nurses and staff members* of boarding institutions; respectively by Webb (1915), Dick (1964, scale B) and Davids & Parenti (1958). The latter investigators found an inter-observer equivalence of $r = +.54$.

Though these ratings are attractive at first sight, we must not forget that they are subject to all the above mentioned objections to inference on the basis of behavioral observation. It is still unclear whether the non-verbal cues an outsider perceives do adequately reflect the subject's inner experiences. Also, there is the same danger of social desirability bias. This danger is even greater in the presence of friends or tutors people probably feel greater pressures than in interaction with more anonymous investigators. Furthermore, the likelihood that the judge's opinions dominate the scene is also greater. The conclusions of acquaintances are more likely to be distorted than those of trained interviewers. On the other hand acquaintances can observe the subject more often and in more varied situations and have sometimes a more accurate view of his characteristic mood than the subject himself. All in all I decided to allow these indicators the benefit of the doubt. Remember that I rejected peer-ratings of overall happiness.

4/3 INDICATORS OF CONTENTMENT

Campbell et al. (1976:489) write that it is hardly possible to devise operational measures which tap the cognitive aspect of subjective life-satisfaction exclusively. They come to this conclusion because they are not clear as to the difference between 'overall happiness' and 'contentment'. If they had been, they would probably have seen that this cognitive aspect can be assessed by asking the individual first to think of his aspirations and by then asking him to compare these aspirations with the realities of life.

Like overall happiness, contentment can be assessed only by means of interrogation. Outside observation of behavior cannot reliably inform us about it. Even if a person once apparently strived to make a lot of money, we are not sure that he is really content when we observe him rolling in luxury later. His aspirations may have grown faster, or he may in fact have aimed at surpassing

his even more successful brother. Another problem is that it is mostly difficult to infer what a person wants on the basis of what one sees him doing. For example, the wish to be respected sometimes manifests itself in conduct that would rather suggest the contrary.

As opposed to 'overall happiness' and 'hedonic level', there is not much empirical research on 'contentment'. Though several theories refer to the concept in its manifestations of 'frustration' and 'hope', attempts to measure it are scarce. More precisely, indicators of 'general' contentment are scarce. There are numerous indicators of perceived success in specific aspirations, such as 'satisfaction with work', 'social mobility' and 'political influence'. However, that is not what is aimed at here.

As yet most indicators on the matter are single direct questions of the multiple choice type. Some of these are presented in exhibit 4/3. None of the questions presented in the exhibit is preceded by an enumeration of the respondent's actual aspirations. Hence they all may tap a somewhat broader phenomenon, possibly 'overall happiness'. I know of only one investigation where the respondents were first asked to mention their aspirations. This is a study by Cantril & Roll (1971). These investigators first asked their respondents to enumerate their personal hopes and then confronted them with the earlier described ten-step-ladder-rating-scale. The respondent was asked to imagine that the top of the ladder represented the complete realization of these hopes and the bottom the reverse. He was then asked to indicate where he feels he stands on the ladder at the present time in relation to the sum total of his aspirations. Yet this question does not distinguish itself sufficiently from overall happiness. Hence we will meet again with it in the section on 'composites' (4/4a).

Next to this common defect some of the questions in the exhibit carry further imperfections. Wilson's contentment score (see exhibit 4/3 at the bottom) contains several items that involve comparison with others. As noted in section 4/1.1a, being more contented than others does not imply that one is not discontented. This indicator was therefore rejected. The questions in the middle section of the exhibit were accepted. However they must be noted to carry some minor defects. Both are worded in such a way that they could be interpreted as referring to success in specific aspirations rather than to general contentment. The term 'accomplishment' might be interpreted as concerning aspirations in the field of social mobility exclusively. Another problem is that Beiser's question focuses on contentment 'up to now' and thereby excludes expectations about future success.

Exhibit 4/3

Some direct closed questions on contentment.

<i>source</i>	<i>question</i>	<i>answer categories</i>	<i>face validity</i>
Bradburn, 1969:63	In getting the things you want out of life, would you say you are doing	very well, pretty well, not too well	+
Bortner & Hultsch, 1970	How would you rate yourself as to how successful or unsuccessful you have been in terms of achieving your goals and aims in life?	rated on a 10-step ladder-like rating scale (presented in exhibit 4/1.1a)	+
Michalos, 1980:394 (goal-achievement gap)	Some people have certain goals or aspirations for various aspects of their lives. They aim for a particular sort of home, income, family life style and so on. Compared to your own aims or goals, for each of the features below, would you say that your life measures up perfectly now, fairly well, about half as well, fairly poorly or just not at all. Please check the percentage that best describes how closely your life now seems to approach <i>your own goals</i> .	not at all, fairly poorly, half as well as your goal, fairly well, matches your goal, no opinion.	+
Buttel et al. 1977:357	How do you feel about what you have accomplished in your life?	7-step verbal rating-scale, ranging from 'completely satisfied' to 'completely dissatisfied'	±
Beiser, 1974:323	Do you feel you have accomplished most of the things you would have liked to up to this point in your life?	yes / no	±
Wilson, 1960:159 (contentment score)	I am not as content as I would like to be. I am more contented than most other people. I am less contented than many people. I am a very contented person. I envy the contentment some other people seem to enjoy. I am at least as contented as most other people. I enjoy more contentment than others seem to. I am not a very contented person. (questions dispersed through interview)	true / false	-

Obviously there are other ways of questioning people about the matter. One can ask people to enumerate the things they wanted to get out of life and which they did get, and the things they wanted but did not get; then they can be asked to what extent the former outweigh the latter. Another way of putting the question is to confront the respondent with some examples of other people's judgements; examples which show that people may hold quite different aspirations and that their perceptions of success are not always identical with current standards. The respondent could then be asked to rate his own contentment. Still another way to broach the matter is to ask the respondent whether there are things he really wants in life, but which are out of reach. One can also ask him to rate his 'mere contentment' as opposed to his 'overall appreciation' of life.

Open questions. Questions of this kind can quite well be framed in an open-ended cast: for example, in a short essay about 'What I wanted out of life and what I actually got out of it'. Less laborious open questions can do as well. For instance, my earlier mentioned sentence completion questionnaire contains several items, such as 'Compared to what I really wanted' and 'To be realistic I expect' (Veenhoven, in preparation).

Focused interview. The earlier mentioned investigation of Neugarten et al. (1961:138) assessed 'congruence between desired and achieved goals' by means of content analysis on extensive interview records. Rater instructions are sufficiently sharp in this case.

Inappropriate questions. Three types of questions cannot be accepted as indicators of contentment. All three refer to a rational assessment of life-as-a-whole by the individual, but none of them quite covers the concept aimed at here completely.

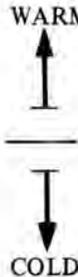
The first concerns comparison 'with other people'. Perceptions of 'relative deprivation' no doubt play a role in assessment of contentment. However, they do not fully cover that phenomenon. There are lots of people who know that they are relatively well off, but who are nevertheless discontented.

Secondly, there are questions on the degree to which the person feels himself to be 'getting what he deserves'. These questions do not adequately represent the present concept either. One may be aware that one had realized more than one was entitled to, but nevertheless be discontented about one's achievements.

Thirdly, contentment has been confused with the 'confirmation of expectations'.

Exhibit 4/4a

Single questions covering more than one happiness variant.

Source	Question	Answer categories	Face validity
Andrews & Withey, 1976:66	Where would you put your life-as-a-whole these days on a feeling thermometer	<p>WARM 100° – Very warm or favorable feeling 85° – Good warm or favorable feeling 70° – Fairly warm or favorable feeling 60° – A bit more warm or favorable than cold feeling — 50° – No feeling at all 40° – A bit more cold or unfavorable feeling 30° – Fairly cold or unfavorable feeling 15° – Quite cold or unfavorable feeling COLD 0° – Very cold or unfavorable feeling</p> 	+
Andrews & Withey, 1976:66	Here are some faces expressing various feelings. Below each is a letter. Which face comes closest to expressing how you feel about your life-as-a-whole?		+
Symonds, 1937:290/1	Check one of the following groups of adjectives which best describes you.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – full of deep joy, excitedly happy, enthusiastic, thrilled – cheerful, successful, optimistic, lighthearted – satisfied, comfortable, life goes smoothly, peaceful – contented at times and at other times discontented, life has both favorable and unfavorable features – restless, impatient, uncertain, dull, cross, confined – anxious, irritated, discouraged, disappointed, discontented – gloomy, miserable, a failure, no pleasure in anything 	±
Iisager, 1948:241	I am	almost always happy/more often happy than unhappy/ about as often happy as unhappy/more often unhappy than happy/almost always unhappy.	±
Scott, 1967:80	Do you experience more happy or more sad events?	happy/sad/don't know	–

Klemmack et al. (1974:269) asked whether or not the respondent has got what he 'expected out of life'. An affirmative answer to that question does not necessarily signify contentment. One may have got all the misery one expected but nevertheless maintain aspirations for better things.

So much for the direct questions. Like overall happiness, contentment cannot be validly assessed by indirect questioning. There are no items that are sufficiently consistently related to it. Neither can contentment be assessed on the basis of peer ratings.

4/4 COMPOSITES

Thus far we dealt with interrogation formats that can be deemed indicative of one of the three happiness variants exclusively. Next there are various measures that cover several of them at the same time. Because they are less specific I am not enthusiastic about any of them. Still several can be deemed acceptable. The following are involved.

a. Single direct questions

Several questions do not fit precisely with my distinction of happiness variants, but nevertheless cover the global field. Some such questions are presented in exhibit 4/4a. The first two (both from Andrews & Withey) refer to overall happiness at first sight. Yet the answer formats are likely to evoke affectively tinged responses. Unfortunately it is not yet established to what extent they actually do.

The third question in the exhibit (Symonds's) refers to all three happiness variants; the items at the top and at the bottom of his rating-scale stress 'hedonic level', but the items in the middle refer to 'contentment'. Several terms are in fact unacceptable ('restless', 'irritated'). Taking context into account I nevertheless let it pass.

The fourth question (Iisager's) is not ideal either. Not only does it use the term 'happiness', but it also asks 'how often' that condition prevails. Thus it is likely to tap hedonic level rather than overall happiness.

I rejected the last question in the exhibit: the one used by Scott. Report of more 'happy events' than 'sad' ones does not guarantee a positive appreciation of life-as-a-whole, nor the predominance of pleasant affects. Not only

is the term 'event' too vague and the temporal context undefined, but prevalence of happy reminiscences may also be due to selective memory.

b. Multiple direct questions

Several investigators worked with sum scores of responses to several questions. Mostly these questions cover more than one happiness variant. Exhibit 4/4b presents some examples (p. 104-105).

The first two sets of questions in the exhibit tap both 'over all happiness' and 'hedonic level'. Items on hedonic level are the most frequent. Though not all ideal, they are acceptable.

The third set (Brophy 's) covers 'overall happiness' and 'hedonic level' as well. The first two items refer to overall appreciation of life and the last one to current affect. Unfortunately the second item is unacceptable because it requires a comparison; therefore the sum score cannot pass.

The last set (Clark & Anderson's) must be rejected as well. Besides several acceptable items on 'overall happiness' (1,2) and 'hedonic level' (3,5) it contains some unacceptable ones (7,8).

c. Focused interviews

Several investigators tried to assess happiness by means of 'focused inter views'. (Neugarten et al., 1961; Palmore, 1969; Stanfiel et al., 1977; Brooks & Elliot, 1971). Mostly the interviews were recorded verbatim and were analyzed later on. Depth-interviews were performed by Goldings (1954) and by Wessman & Ricks (1966). These latter investigations involved several successive interviews, mostly by more than one interviewer. Correspondence between different interviewers appeared to be generally high. (Goldings, 1954:40, $W = +.58$; Wessman & Ricks, 1966:103, $r = +.80$).

As noted earlier, focused interviews offer several advantages: interviewing allows more opportunity for checking whether the respondent has developed an overall evaluation of his life and there are more possibilities of distinguishing between the respondent's own judgement and his perception of how others would rate him. The confident atmosphere may elicit more honest responses and the danger of self-deceit can be lessened.

Along with these advantages there are so me serious drawbacks however. One was already mentioned in section 3/1f. A confident relationship with an

Exhibit 4/4b**Sets of questions covering more than one happiness variant**

<i>Source</i>	<i>Questions</i>	<i>Answer categories</i>	<i>Face validity</i>
Thompson et al., 1960:166	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. All in all, how much happiness would you say you find in life today? 2. In general, how would you say you feel most of the time, in good spirits or in low spirits? 3. On the whole, how satisfied would you say you are with your life today? 	<p>a good deal/some, but not very much/almost none</p> <p>usually in good spirits/sometimes in good spirits, sometimes in low spirits/usually in low spirits</p> <p>very satisfied/fairly satisfied/not very satisfied/not satisfied at all</p>	+
Bachmann et al., 1967:193/200	<p>Describe the kind of person you are. Please read each sentence, then mark how often it is true for you</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. I feel like smiling. 2. I generally feel in good spirits. 3. I feel happy. 4. I am very satisfied with life. 5. I find a good deal of happiness in life. 6. I feel sad. 	<p>almost always true/often true/sometimes true/seldom true/never true</p>	+
Brophy, 1959: 283 and 302	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The following statements describe how some people feel about life. Which statement comes closest to how you feel? 	<p>Every day is full of joy/your life is on the whole fine and happy/you have troubles, but they don't last and aren't nearly as important as the good things are/there is usually more good than bad in your life/good and bad – Happiness and unhappiness are about even for you/there are many good things in your life, but there are usually more troubles than joys/life is pretty unhappy for you -The good doesn't amount to much/</p>	—

- | | |
|--|--|
| 2. If you compare yourself with others of the same sex and age, how would you rate your own general happiness? | life for you is unhappy and worthless/every day is full of misery.
Among the happiest of all/far happier than the great majority of people/somewhat happier than the general run of people/about average/somewhat less happy than the general run of people/much less happy than the great majority of people/among the most unhappy of all |
| 3. How much of the time do you feel happy? | All of the time/most of the time/a good deal of the time/about half of the time/occasionally/seldom/never |

Clark &
Anderson,
1967:49

1. How satisfied are you with your life today?
 2. How much happiness would you say you find in life today?
 3. How have your spirits been lately?
 4. How often do you get the feeling that your life today is not very useful?
 5. Do you feel moody and blue?
 6. Have you felt lately that life is not worth living?
 7. Are you less interested in things like your personal appearance and table manners and things like that?
 8. How much do you plan ahead the things you will be doing next week or the week after?
-

interviewer has its pros and cons. It may yield more honest responses, but it can also have reverse effects. The context of a depth interview may result in overavowal of 'weak' points. Moreover there is the danger that the interviewer makes the judgement (rather than the respondent himself) on the basis of his implicit preconceived theory of happiness. As interviewers are mostly clinical psychologists, such ratings are moreover liable to reflect an estimate of 'mental health' rather than of experiential happiness.

There are two ways of dealing with this danger: firstly to start with a clear definition of happiness and secondly to base the ratings exclusively on the words of the respondent himself. Both require clear instructions for the interviewer. Unfortunately such instructions are often absent in reports of investigations using this method. Only Neugarten et al. (1961:137/139) sufficiently described how they derived their 'Life-Satisfaction Rating'. That description shows that they actually assessed something quite different than what I call 'happiness' here. Only their assessment of 'mood tone' is acceptable. It covers both overall happiness and hedonic level.

All this causes me to mistrust interviewer-ratings if explicit criteria are not reported. That mistrust is not lessened if the ratings are said to have been made by 'trained' or 'experienced' psychologists. Yet I decided to allow them the benefit of the doubt. If no defects were apparent in the available information I accepted them.

4/5 DO THE THREE KINDS OF INDICATORS TAP DIFFERENT PHENOMENA?

In the first three paragraphs of this chapter I took great pains to distinguish between indicators of 'overall happiness', 'hedonic level of affect' and 'contentment'. At the end of this chapter I must now ask whether these actually tap different phenomena. In spite of their subtle differences, the three kinds of indicators could in fact measure an essentially similar issue. They could do so because they still do not distinguish sufficiently sharply, or because the conceptual distinctions have no basis in reality. If the three kinds of indicators do indeed tap different things, five consequences can be expected.

Firstly, indicators of the same kind can be expected to link more strongly with each other than with indicators of other happiness variants. Indicators of overall happiness must correlate better with indicators of the same than with indicators of hedonic level and contentment; indicators of hedonic level must correlate closer with other indices of that matter than with indicators of

overall happiness and contentment, and indicators of contentment must relate more closely to each other than to indicators of overall happiness and hedonic level. Secondly, it is to be expected that indicators of overall happiness link more strongly with indicators of the two components of happiness than indicators of the two components do with each other. This would follow my suggestion that judgements of overall happiness are based on independently reached 'affective' and 'rational' appraisals of life.

Thirdly, this same suggestion predicts that the statistical link between (indicators of) overall happiness and hedonic level is to some extent independent of the correspondence between overall happiness and contentment; and the link between overall happiness and contentment partly independent of the relationship between overall happiness and hedonic level.

In the fourth place, we can expect the variation in indices of overall happiness to be partly independent of the variation in indices of hedonic level and contentment. This would follow the claim in section 2/3c that 'overall' happiness embodies a judgement which is not fully implied in the 'component' appraisals.

Lastly, the three kinds of measures should yield somewhat different correlates when related to various other factors. If they really represent different phenomena, they are likely to relate differently to factors such as 'age', 'gender' and 'education'.

I will now inspect whether there is empirical support for these predictions. Modern statistical methods would allow the checking of several of these predictions simultaneously (for instance 'Latent Structure Analysis'). However, those methods require broad data sets which involve at least three indicators of each of the three happiness variants. No such set being available, it must suffice to inspect each of the predictions separately on the basis of stray and imperfect data.

Do indicators of the three happiness variants correlate more strongly with each other than with indicators of other happiness variants?

The best way to find out is to include at least three valid indicators of each of the three happiness variants in one empirical investigation. Factor analysis must then demonstrate the existence of three factors; respectively an 'overall happiness' factor, a 'hedonic level' factor and a 'contentment' factor. As noted no such study has been performed as yet. Though the question can therefore not be answered definitely, I can at least answer it provisionally. I can do so by comparing the results of the

various investigations that have haphazardly correlated happiness indicators. For that purpose I will refer to the inventory of acceptable investigations to be reported in the next chapter. Twenty of these assessed correlations between indicators of two or more of the happiness variants at hand. These correlations are summarized in section H1 of the Databook (Part III). They are all around $+0.50$; the spread not too great. Table 4/5 presents the averages. These averages are based on studies among quite different populations, using different measures of association. Hence these data are merely suggestive. They suggest that the indicators of both overall happiness and hedonic level correspond indeed somewhat more closely to indicators of their own kind than to indicators of other happiness variants. The differences are not impressive however.

Is overall happiness more closely related to its components than the components are to each other?

Then the prediction based on the assumption that people, in evaluating the overall quality of their life, tend to draw on the aspect-appraisals of 'hedonic level' and 'contentment'. Testing this prediction requires an investigation that involves at least one indicator of each of the three happiness variants. There are two such investigations: one by Tissue (1972) and one by myself (Veenhoven, in preparation). As Tissue did not report intercorrelations the latter must do. This investigation was held among 417 persons in the Netherlands. It assessed overall happiness by means of the content analysis of free answer responses on various questions on one's life-history. Hedonic level was measured by repeated questioning on the mood of the day (during ten days) by means of the 'Elation-Depression' scale of Wessman & Ricks (1966). Contentment was assessed by means of a single direct question about the degree to which one's life goals are being realized, figuring in the 'Purpose in Life Test' of Crumbaugh & Maholic (1969). In this investigation overall happiness appeared indeed to be more closely related to hedonic level and to contentment than hedonic level and contentment to each other. Tau-b was respectively $+0.31$, $+0.28$ and $+0.19$. Table 4/5 presented a similar picture; there the values are respectively $+0.49$, $+0.48$ and $+0.37$. It is not feasible to test these differences for significance.

Do the component indicators relate to overall happiness independently?

The data from my investigation in the Netherlands also showed that the associations between overall happiness and the two components were largely independent. As noted above zero-order correlation in tau was $+0.31$ between overall happiness and hedonic level, $+0.28$ between overall happiness and contentment

Table 4/5**Average correlations between various happiness indicators in twenty empirical investigations.**

	<i>various indicators of overall happiness</i>	<i>various indicators of hedonic level of affect</i>	<i>various indicators of contentment</i>
various indicators of overall happiness	+0.55		
various indicators of hedonic level of affect	+0.49	+0.55	
various indicators of contentment	+0.48	+0.37	No studies which involved two or more indicators of contentment

Source: Databook part III sections H 1.1, H 1.2 and H 1.3 (Veenhoven 1984).

and +.19 between hedonic level and contentment. Ordinal path analysis* showed an ordinal path analytic effect of hedonic level on overall happiness of +.27 (Standard partial Somers d_{ij}) and of contentment on overall happiness of +.23. It is noted that one cannot just generalize this first finding over other happiness indicators; and neither over other populations.

Is there any variation in indices of overall happiness that is not explained by hedonic level and contentment? My investigation in the Netherlands found the variation in overall happiness largely independent of hedonic level and contentment. Together these latter two variables explained only 15 percent of its variance. Again, this finding cannot settle the matter definitely, in particular not because instrument variance may veil much of the actual variance.

Do the three kinds of indicators relate differently to non-happiness factors?

Several investigations related indicators of two or more happiness variants to one and the same non-happiness factor. Eight studies did so for indicators of both overall happiness and hedonic level (Andrews & Withey, 1974; Bradburn & Caplovitz, 1965; Bradburn, 1969, Cameron et al., 1971; Gaitz & Scott, 1972; Gorman, 1971; Lowenthal & Boler, 1965; Matlin, 1966; Snyder & Kivlin, 1975). One investigation related indicators of both overall happiness and contentment to the same set of 'non-happiness' factors (Bortner & Hultsch, 1970). As noted above only two investigations covered indicators of all three kinds (Tissue, 1972; Veenhoven, in preparation). Comparison of the correlates yielded by the various happiness indicators leads to the following conclusions:

The first conclusion is that the statistical links are strikingly similar. Out of

* There has been much discussion about the justification of performing path analysis on ordinal data. For Smith (1972, 1974), Somers (1974) and others, the calculations are straightforward. Correlations are Kendall's tau's, partial correlations are partial tau's, regression coefficients are Somers' d_{ij} 's, and path coefficients (standardized partial regression coefficients) become ordinal path coefficients (standardized partial Somers d_{ij} 's).

Wilson (1974 a + b) has criticized the possibility of performing a path analysis on ordinal data on the ground of interpretation and inference. As far as inferential problems are concerned, he seems to be right in his criticism: it is very difficult to infer the results of a sample to the corresponding population, when data are measured on the ordinal level in a multivariate context. His objections to interpretation possibilities, however, are wrong. An path coefficient (in our study +.27 and +.23) has a clear interpretation of asymmetric effect of one variable on another, as Somers himself has showed.

the 120 correlations compared, 95 differ less than .10. This is all the more remarkable if one realizes that the correlations between the happiness indicators concerned are characteristically low. Remember exhibit 4/5.

Then the differences (in size of zero-order correlations): Firstly a difference appears in the relationship to *health*. Tissue (1972:92) showed 'self assessed physical health' to be more strongly associated with hedonic level than with either overall happiness or contentment in his sample of aged well fare recipients in the US. Also Gorman (1971:216/222) found hedonic level to be more related to perceived health than overall happiness. (In a study among US college students). On the other hand no differences appear in the studies of Gaitz & Scott (1972:65) and Matlin (1966:28/29). The latter found a difference in the relation with 'mental health', however. Mentally ill people appeared to be more characterized by depressed affect than by overall unhappiness (p. 65). See section 7/1.1 a for more detail.

A second difference appears in the correlation with *factors close to overall happiness itself*. Measures of overall happiness correlated more strongly with overall-happiness-like factors than the component measures. Bortner & Hultsch (1970 :44) found 'perceived obstacles in life' to be more strongly related to overall happiness of US adults than to their 'perceived success in realizing goals' (synonym for contentment). Likewise Gorman (1971 :215/216) found the same measure of overall happiness to yield stronger correlations with 'former happiness', 'expected happiness' and 'expected improvement of life ' than with hedonic level as measured by elation-depression scores. My own investigation in the Netherlands yielded similar results. A same difference appears in the relationship with 'intentions to continue one's life as it is'. Both Andrews & Withey (1974:15) and Bradburn (1969:51, 68) found this factor more strongly related to overall happiness than to hedonic level as measured by the Affect Balance Score. On the other hand Gorman (1971:215) did not find 'perceived improvement in life' to be more strongly related to overall happiness than to hedonic level.

A third difference concerns *social withdrawal*. Lowenthal & Boler (1965:367) found that withdrawn people rate themselves as affectively 'depressed' rather than 'unhappy'. Another difference found by these investigators is that 'deprivation' is more closely associated with reported unhappiness than with depressed mood. In this study deprivation is indicated by a sum score of 'compulsory retirement', 'widowhood' and 'disability in carrying out socially valued tasks', as such it refers to standards figuring in more rational evaluations of life. Hence it would probably associate even more strongly with contentment.

Several more differences appear in the data gathered by Gorman (1971). It would take too long to discuss all these findings in detail. Because Gorman's sample is rather small I will only mention differences of .25 and more. The most notable finding is, that use of marijuana and barbiturates is clearly negatively related to overall happiness, but not to hedonic level. This suggests that these drugs may bolster one's mood, but cannot change one's attitude towards life. Further differences concern 'social desirability' and 'pressure of academic work'. Both these variables relate slightly negatively to overall happiness and positively to hedonic level. 'Rigidity' was found to be negatively related to both, but more clearly to hedonic level than to overall happiness.

Finally some further differences that appeared in my own investigation: Contentment appeared more closely related to 'age' than overall happiness and hedonic level. Compared to hedonic level it was also more strongly related to 'occupational status'. Another difference concerned the relationship with 'self-actualization'. This factor was found clearly related to overall happiness and hedonic level but not to contentment. Contentment was also less related to 'worrying about the future'. However, it was relatively strongly related to the 'perceived relatedness of the past and the future'. (Tables not shown).

A final thing to note in this context is that Americans were found to answer questions on hedonic level slightly more positively in the spring than in the winter, while no seasonal difference appeared in the responses to questions about life satisfaction (Smith 1979:26).

So much for the differences that appeared in investigations which questioned a single population about two or more variants of happiness. In the next chapters we will meet with still further differences that appear when investigations among different populations are compared. Chapter 6 will, for example, demonstrate that overall happiness tends to remain stable when one grows older, but that hedonic level declines (6/2.2). Chapter 7 will further show that overall happiness is less closely related to 'activity' than hedonic level is (7/1.3) and that the same holds for its links to 'inner control' (7/2.1). On the other hand overall happiness will appear more closely associated with the 'wish to maintain status quo' (7/4a).

These differences deserve closer examination. Here it suffices to conclude that differences do exist. Though small, they do demonstrate that the conceptual distinction is not without sense.

In sum. There are several indications that the three kinds of happiness indicators discerned in this chapter do indeed tap different phenomena. However, the matter is not yet settled definitely.

4/6 SUMMARY

Happiness has been measured in many different ways. There is a particularly great variety of interrogation techniques and questions. Most methods were proposed by investigators who failed to define happiness formally or who had in mind a different concept than the one used here.

I therefore inspected all current formats for 'face validity'. This involved the close reading of questions, instructions and eventual further devices, in order to assess whether or not they referred exclusively to one of the phenomena defined in chapter 2. For most indicators it was quite clear whether or not they fit in with the present conception of happiness. Yet there were also cases of doubt, several indicators having both strong and weak sides. Choices on that matter were complicated by the fact that validity demands are not identical for all three happiness variants and that not all observational methods can be judged by the same criteria.

The inspection resulted in the rejection of almost half the currently used indicators. It appeared for instance that several questions deal in fact with essentially different matters e.g. with 'social adjustment', 'zestful living', 'optimism', etc. In many cases it was entirely unclear what the indicators actually tapped. Many investigators used, for example, long lists of questions, referring to various things that have at one time or another been associated with 'well-being'. In spite of their statistical construct validity these inventories are theoretically meaningless.

The types of indicators that were deemed acceptable are enumerated in the next chapter in exhibit 5/2c. They can be characterized as follows:

Overall happiness can be assessed by direct questioning only: indirect questions tap essentially different matters. Direct questions referring to the appreciation of life-as-a-whole are preferable to questions using the word 'happiness' as a keyword. Though not ideal, the latter were nevertheless deemed acceptable. Questions can be framed in different formats: in one or more closed questions, in open-ended questions and in focused interviews. In the latter two cases clear instructions for content analysis of responses are required. Peer ratings of overall happiness were not accepted.

Hedonic level can be assessed in three ways: by direct questioning, by indirect questioning and by ratings on the basis of non-verbal behavior. Again the method of direct questioning is to be preferred: especially when the individual is asked several times during a certain period how pleasant he feels there and then. Though generally less dependable, several indirect methods were deemed acceptable. Some projective methods for example seem to be reasonably valid. Ratings by others were also passed, provided rating instructions were sufficiently specific.

Contentment can be measured by means of direct questions only. Like overall happiness it cannot be validly assessed by indirect questions or by peer ratings. Direct questions must again be specific. They probably work best when preceded by an enumeration of one's major aspirations. Questions can again be framed in various formats.

Composites. Finally there are several acceptable indicators that cover two or more of the above mentioned happiness variants. The majority of these consists of single direct questions which by wording or answer format refer both to overall happiness and hedonic level. Some indicators work with multiple questions. Characteristically these questions cover both overall happiness and one or both of its components. One final method in this context is the 'focused interview' of which the 'depth interview' is a variant. Such interrogations tend to broach overall happiness as well as its components. Through lack of clear reports about themes and rating it is mostly difficult to assess their face validity.

The chaff having been separated from the corn, it was then considered whether the three kinds of happiness indicators discussed here do indeed tap somewhat different realities. There are several indications that this is indeed the case. Firstly indicators of the same kind appeared to relate more closely with each other than with indicators of other happiness variants. Secondly indicators of the two happiness components appeared more closely related to indices of overall happiness than to each other. Further there was evidence from at least one investigation that indices of hedonic level and contentment are more or less independently linked to a measure of overall happiness and that this variation was to some extent independent of the former two. Finally the three happiness indicators appear to relate somewhat differently to factors such as 'age', 'health', 'social involvement' and 'intentions to change one's life'.

CHAPTER 5

GATHERING THE AVAILABLE DATA

Having settled what indicators of happiness can be deemed acceptable, I continued by taking stock of the investigations that had actually used them. This was a laborious job. Some of the practical problems involved will be mentioned in section 5/1. As we will see 245 acceptable investigations were found. Some of their characteristics will be described in section 5/2. The listing of acceptable studies was only one step; the next was to make them accessible. This required that the data were formulated in the same language and that findings were summarized in a clear and comparable way. This procedure is reported in section 5/3. The abundant data having been organized conveniently, I got a better view on their limitations. In section 5/4 I will mention the most obvious ones and anticipate the problems of interpretation that arise in the next chapters.

5/1 SEARCHING EMPIRICAL HAPPINESS STUDIES

There is no international reference system that covers all of the research reports that have ever been produced by social scientists throughout the world. Neither is there any bibliographical system that uses a classification that fits with my conceptualization of happiness. Trying to trace reports of all the empirical happiness studies ever performed is therefore rather like searching for a needle in a haystack. More specifically I met with the following problems:

a. Search problems.

Happiness variously labeled. The meaning attached to the word 'happiness' here is obviously not shared by everybody. As we have seen, titles using the term 'happiness' often refer to other matters, while reports that use different labels sometimes deal with it. Hence it was not enough to a mass publications that use 'happiness' as a keyword, but I had to cover various other search entries as well. Titles often being misleading, I had to inspect all promising publications in order to assess whether they actually dealt with 'happiness' or not. I looked at more than a thousand. Several of these research reports did not specify precisely what they had measured. In these cases I wrote to the investigator asking for more details. Unfortunately I could not get in touch with all the authors concerned.

Too broad search entries. Happiness and related terms were not used in most indexes when I started my search. Hence I was forced to inspect rather broader categories, such as 'emotion', 'mental health' and attitudes'. This required a lot of work. Fortunately several bibliographical systems were computerized when I was halfway. This enabled me not only to select titles that used promising keywords, but also to identify publications which use these words in their abstract.

Book publications difficult to trace. Current bibliographical systems cover journal articles better than book publications. Nevertheless, the few books that dealt exclusively with happiness could easily be spotted. However, many empirical data on happiness are reported in books that deal with quite different matters, such as 'health' and 'alcoholism'. As yet there is no reference system that adequately covers such sidelines in book publications. In order to detect such publications I had to rely on references in other publications, on hints and good luck. Another problem was that many of those book-like reports had a very limited circulation. I struck on several that had not left the research institute: among others reports from opinion-poll agencies and unpublished theses.

Non-English publications underrepresented. Most international reference systems cover publications in the English language more thoroughly than publications in other languages. As a result I found only a few reports in German and French and not a single one in Spanish, Japanese or Russian. Combing out libraries in the countries concerned would probably yield more of

them. I intend to do so when preparing a sequel to this book, which will cover the empirical literature up to and including 1985.

When to stop? As we will see in the next section, the number of empirical investigations on happiness has grown considerably in the last decade. Hence I was confronted with an ever growing list of promising titles. I had to stop somewhere and decided to take January 1st, 1976 as a cut-off-date. I gather that about a hundred more investigations were reported since. Though I have not inventoried these systematically, I came upon at least forty. Where useful, their results will be mentioned shortly in the following chapters.

b. Search procedure

I started with an examination of the 'Psychological Abstracts' from 1928 to 1972. I scanned all abstracts that were listed under the following keywords:

'adaptation', 'adjustment', 'affect', 'aspiration', 'awareness', 'conflict', 'depression', 'deprivation', 'emotion', 'expectancy', 'frustration', 'happiness', 'life-satisfaction', 'mental health', 'motivation', 'morale', 'mood', 'satisfaction', 'self-evaluation', 'stress' and 'suicide'.

Whenever an abstract seemed to refer to empirical data about happiness, the original report was ordered and inspected. This procedure yielded some thirty usable reports. In the references contained in these reports I found several more.

In 1976 five abstract systems had been computerized to some extent, namely: the 'Psychological Abstracts' (1967-1975), the 'Sociological Abstracts' (1963-1974), the 'Educational Resources Information Center' (1966-1975) and the 'Social Sciences Citation Index' (1972-1975). These files were mechanically scanned for the following keywords: *'happiness', 'morale', 'life-satisfaction', 'evaluation of life', 'general satisfaction', 'hedonic level', 'elation', 'general mood', 'attitude towards life', 'contentment with life', 'emotional satisfaction', 'psychological well-being', 'inner well-being', 'mood level' and 'daily mood'.* This resulted in 2159 abstracts, a hundred of which turned out to refer to an investigation that had used an acceptable indicator of happiness. In some of these reports I again found references to other publications.

Furthermore I searched several libraries in my own country and inspected the indices of many books on related subjects, thus coming across several more reports.

Finally I consulted the authors of acceptable reports; I sent them a copy

Exhibit 5/2a

Number¹ of empirical happiness investigations between 1911 and 1975² by continent, type of population covered and happiness-variant³ involved.

	1911- 1920	1921- 1930	1931- 1940	1941- 1950	1951- 1960	1961- 1965	1966- 1970	1971- 1975	Total
Africa					1	1		1	3
Asia					1	8	1	7	17
Australia				2			1	1	4
Europe	2	1		14	2	8	6	33	66
Anglo America	2	4	5	10	15	19	33	58	146
Latin America				1	2	3		3	9
National population				23	13	23	10	62	131
Regional/local population						7	3	11	21
Students/pupils	4	3	5	3	2	3	10	8	38
Aged people					5	2	2	7	16
Other categories		2		1	1	4	16	15	39
Overall happiness		1	2	25	20	37	29	89	203
Hedonic level of affect	4	5	3	1	2	11	18	36	80
Contentment					2	2	1	1	6
Total	4	5	5	27	21	39	41	103	245

1. The number of separate samples was counted, not the number of publications.

2. If no date of data gathering was reported, the data are presumed to have been gathered one year before publication.

3. Some investigations covered more than one happiness-variant.

of the excerpt I had made from their publication and enclosed a list of the titles I had found so far. I asked them whether they knew of any more. I thereby received a few dozen tips.

This procedure was very time consuming, in particular because the search criteria were adjusted several times. The criteria for the valid measurement of happiness (reported in chapter 4) have in fact sharpened a great deal as I got a better view of the variety of methods that had been used. All in all, the search took almost a year's work. Ton Jonkers did part of the job.

5/2 THE STUDIES FOUND

I managed to find 150 publications, reporting altogether 156 acceptable research projects, which covered 245 samples. I will refer to the latter as 'investigations'. Probably this is not all that is in fact available. Though incomplete, this crop is nevertheless richer than any of the earlier literature reviews had surmised. Remember that the best documented article mentioned only fifty titles, while it set out to cover a broader field (Fordyce, 1972). In fact that review mentioned only 18 reports from the present collection and missed 69 published in the period it was meant to cover.

The investigations found concern different populations at different moments and used a great variety of happiness indicators. Let's take a closer look at their characteristics.

a. Periods

The first empirical investigation on happiness was one in 1912 among English students and schoolboys. It focused on hedonic level. In the decades that followed several small studies in the US dealt with the hedonic level of students as well. After World War II the number of investigations increased and emphasis shifted to overall happiness and general populations surveys. See exhibit 5/2 a. Since 1970 the number increased even more and the stream still swells in the early 1980's.

At first sight this gradual rise in the number of investigations might suggest that social scientists are becoming more aware of their calling to study happiness and that the subject is gaining a more prominent place in the order of research priorities. Yet we should realize that the entire volume of social research has expanded almost as much during this period: in fact the subject is still the Cinderella it always was.

Exhibit 5/2b

Number¹ of empirical happiness investigations between 1911 and 1975, by population² covered and type of sample.³

	National population		Regional population	
	prob.	non-prob.	prob.	non-prob.
Africa	2	1		
Asia	12		3	
India	3			
Israel	1		2	
Japan	3			
Other	5		1	
Australia	4			
Europe	48	3	2	1
Britain/England	8	1		1
France	8			
W. Germany	6			
Italy	5			
the Netherlands	6		2	
Scandinavia	5	1		
Other	10	1		
Anglo America	46	6	14	1
US	44	6	13	1
Canada	2		1	
Latin America	9			
Brazil	2			
Mexico	2			
Other	5			
Total	121	10	19	2

1. The number of separate samples was counted, not the number of publications.

2. Major countries are listed under the continents. The 'other' categories contain investigations in countries not presented, or in different combinations of countries. The number behind the major regions are sumscores.

Students/pupils		Aged people		Other special groups		Total	
prob.	non-prob.	prob.	non-prob.	prob.	non-prob.	prob.	non-prob.
						2	1
				1	1	16	1
						3	
				1	1	3	1
						3	
						6	
						4	
						6	15
						8	6
						8	
						2	2
						5	
				1	1	9	3
						5	2
						10	2
						46	6
						14	1
						44	6
						13	1
						2	
						1	
						9	
						2	
						2	
						5	
						121	10
						19	2
						6	32
						7	9
						15	24
						168	77

3. In some cases type of sample construction was not reported. In these cases samples claimed to be 'representative' were considered as 'probability' samples, and all others as 'non-probability' samples.

b. Populations

More than half of the investigations concern North-America and, with two exceptions, all the US. About seventy come from European countries: fourteen of which come from Britain, eight from France, twelve from the Netherlands and eight from Western Germany. In each of the other parts of the world only a few happiness investigations have been performed. See exhibit 5/2b on the foregoing two pages.

The relatively large number of investigations from the Netherlands is not only due to the flourishing social sciences in that country, but also to the fact that I happen to live there and thus had a better chance of finding reports that have not reached any international reference system. In fact only five of the Dutch reports could have been traced in that way.

Most of the investigations at hand were based on probability samples in national populations. Next some twenty investigations focused on regional populations, most of them based on probability samples as well. The remaining investigations covered various more specific populations, the most frequently studied ones being 'elderly people' and 'students'. There are further more some stray investigations among e.g. 'workers', 'university professors', 'military personnel', 'housewives' and 'farmers'.

c. Indicators

Most investigations focused on 'overall happiness', some eighty dealt with 'hedonic level' and only a few assessed 'contentment'.

Let us now examine in more detail what indicators were involved. Exhibit 5/2c lists all types of indicators deemed acceptable in chapter 4. Next it shows how often each of these was used. See page 124 and 125.

'Overall happiness' was most frequently tapped by means of single direct questions using the word 'happiness'. Direct questions on 'life-satisfaction' were second in popularity among investigators. Surprisingly few investigators worked with open-ended questions or focused interviews.

'Hedonic level' was often assessed by means of sum scores of questions on specific affects: mostly by variants of the so-called 'Affect Balance Scale'. (For short 'ABS', developed by Bradburn and presented in exhibit 4/2.2). In several instances it was measured by repeated questions on the momentary level of cheerfulness, more often than not by means of the 'Elation-Depression Scale'. (By Wessman & Ricks: presented in exhibit 4/2.1b). A few investigations

used ratings by others. Open-ended questions and focused interviews hardly appear.

The few investigations that assessed 'contentment' all used single direct questions, except one that worked with focused interviews.

Finally some thirty investigations involved 'composite' indicators, covering more than one of the happiness variants at the same time. More than half of these combined questions on overall happiness and hedonic level. The two 'clinical ratings' probably covered matters of contentment as well.

d. Some further characteristics

Part of the harvest consists of public-opinion polls, which provide no more information than frequency distributions of answers to happiness questions by certain populations at a certain time. I found 66 of them. Taken individually these investigations are not very interesting, but together they allow comparison across time and culture.

Most investigations do more than count happy and unhappy people: generally they also investigate whether certain characteristics are more frequent among the former than among the latter. I found 179 such 'correlational' studies. Most of these use zero-order correlations, but quite a few specified at least some of the correlations found: the correlation between happiness and income has for example been specified by variables such as 'gender', 'age' and 'social rank'. Most investigations are rather superficial and haphazard in this respect, only about thirty of them involving broad and systematic elaborations.

Almost all investigations at hand are 'synchronic' ones; only 8 involved longitudinal observations of happiness; mostly over periods no longer than a year. Six further ones related synchronic observations on happiness to longitudinal data on other variables.

5/3 PRESENTING THE FINDINGS

Filling a bookcase with acceptable studies is only the first step. One then has to organize the abundant findings conveniently. To that end I first excerpted all the reports in a uniform way. A shortened version of these excerpts is printed in a separate volume named '*Databook of Happiness*', which is published simultaneously with the present one. (Veenhoven, 1984). The excerpts

Exhibit 5/2c

Indicators of happiness used in empirical investigations between 1911 and 1975¹

<i>CONTENTMENT</i>		<i>number of studies</i>	<i>COMPOSITES</i>		<i>number of studies</i>	
<i>Code</i>	<i>Type of indicator</i>		<i>Code</i>	<i>Type of indicators</i>		
CON 1	Questions on contentment	5	COMP 1	Questions covering both overall happiness and perceived hedonic level of affect	16	
1.1	Single closed question		1.1	Single closed question		5
1.2	Index of closed questions		1.2	Index of closed questions		1
1.3	Open-ended question		1.3	Open-ended question		
1.4	Focused interview	1	1.4	Focused interview		
CON 2	Expert ratings of contentment on the basis of longer clinical interview		COMP 2	Questions covering both overall happiness and contentment		
CON 3	Composites, combining two or more of the abovementioned		2.1	Single closed question	1	
			2.2	Index of closed questions		
			2.3	Open-ended question		
			2.4	Focused interview		
			COMP 3	Questions covering both perceived hedonic level and contentment		
			3.1	Single closed question		
			3.2	Index of closed questions		
			3.3	Open-ended question		
			3.4	Focused interview		
			COMP 4	Questions covering both overall happiness, perceived hedonic level and contentment		
			4.1	Single closed question	2	
			4.2	Index of closed questions	1	
			4.3	Open-ended question	1	
			4.4	Focused interview	1	
			COMP 5	Expert ratings on happiness on the basis of clinical contact	2	
Total:		6	Total:		29	

3. Types distinguished in chapter 4.

<i>OVERALL HAPPINESS</i>		<i>HEDONIC LEVEL OF AFFECT</i>	
<i>Code (2)</i>	<i>Type of indicator (3)</i>	<i>Code</i>	<i>Type of indicator</i>
	<i>number of studies</i>		<i>number of studies</i>
HAPP 1	Questions using the term 'happiness'	AFF 1	Questions on perceived hedonic level in general (indefinite period)
1.1	Single closed question	1.1	Single closed question on perceived overall hedonic level in general
1.2	Index of closed questions	1.2	Index of closed questions on perceived occurrence of specific
1.3	Open-ended question	1.3	Index of closed questions on perceived average affects
1.4	Focused interview	1.4	Open-ended question on perceived hedonic level in general
	130	1.5	Focused interview on perceived hedonic level in general
HAPP 2	Questions using terms like 'satisfaction with life'	AFF 2	Questions on perceived hedonic level over last period (one week to about a year)
2.1	Single closed question	2.1	Single closed question on perceived overall hedonic level over the last period
2.2	Index of closed questions	2.2	Index of closed questions on perceived overall hedonic level over the last period
2.3	Open-ended question	2.3	Index of closed questions on perceived occurrence of specific affects over the last period
	67	2.4	Open-ended question on perceived hedonic level over the last period
2.3	Open-ended question	2.5	Focused interview on perceived hedonic level over the past period
2.4	Focused interview		
HAPP 3	Other questions focusing exclusively on overall happiness	AFF 3	Repeated questions on reported momentaneous hedonic level (periods of one day at the most)
3.1	Single closed question	3.1	Repeated single closed question on momentaneous overall hedonic level
3.2	Index of closed questions	3.2	Repeated index of closed questions on momentaneous overall hedonic level
3.3	Open-ended question	3.3	Repeated index of closed questions on momentaneous occurrence of specific affects
3.4	Focused interview	3.4	Repeated open-ended question on momentaneous hedonic level
	45	3.5	Repeated focused interview on momentaneous hedonic level
HAPP 4	Composites, combining two or more of the above mentioned indicators	AFF 4	Projective measures of hedonic level of affect
		AFF 5	Ratings by others of hedonic level of affect
		5.1	Clinical ratings
		5.2	Peer ratings
		5.3	Ratings by teachers, nurses, parents etc.
		AFF 6	Composites, combining two or more of the above-mentioned indicators
Total:	243	Total:	69

1. Some investigations used more than one indicator

2. Codes used in Databook

are presented in part II of that Databook. Next I arranged all the separate findings by subject. Over 4000 were involved, the presentation of which took 335 pages. These findings are also presented in the 'Databook'; 'correlational' data in Part III of that book and data on the 'distribution' of happiness in national populations in Part IV. On the basis of these summaries I then wrote chapters 6, 7 and 8 of this book.

The procedure may look simpler than it actually was. It is worthwhile having a look at the problems involved and the way I dealt with them.

a. Difficulties in attaining an overall view

Excerpting the reports was necessary for several reasons: for instance several reports were rather chaotic and their findings therefore hard to trace. Some had relevant information hidden in footnotes and appendices, while others had presented this information in separate (and not easily available) statistical supplements.

Another problem was that not all reports used the same language. Not only are not all the reports in English, they moreover used subtly differing technical vocabularies. Together with the great number of investigations, these problems render it impossible to get a general view; even for the interested scholar who is willing to spend several months reading the various reports. Uniform excerpts were thus necessary in order to prevent the information gathered from getting lost.

In excerpting the reports I met with the following technical problems.

Different labeling of variables. As noted before, not all investigators used the same words to depict 'happiness'. The same problem appears in labeling variables that were related to it; essentially similar co-varying factors being adorned with quite different names. Answers to questions about 'self-esteem' for instance, were labeled with terms as 'mental-health', 'role-adjustment' and 'identity'. On the other hand one and the same term sometimes covers distinct concepts. The term 'health' for example refers sometimes to 'absence of apparent disease', sometimes to 'frequency of complaints' and in an other instance to 'longevity'.

As in the case of happiness I solved the problem by forgetting the theoretical labels and focusing on what had been actually observed and how. When ordering the findings later on, I classified them on the basis of this information and devised uniform labels myself for the categories thus constructed.

Different technical vocabulary. Another problem was that the reports do not use the same technical terms to describe the design of the investigation. The term 'reliability' for example is sometimes used to refer to similarity in response to the same question asked twice and sometimes to the association between answers on different questions believed to represent the same variable. Likewise terms such as 'scale', 'non-response' and 'sample' carry different meanings. This confusion of tongues is nicely illustrated by van de Merwe's 'Thesaurus of Social Research Terminology', a voluminous book, the purpose of which is to list current technical jargon (Van de Merwe, 1974). Obviously this situation can easily lead to misunderstanding.

I felt therefore obliged to define all the technical terms I used in the excerpts and to translate all the reports into that terminology. The resulting list can be found in appendix A of the Databook.

Incomparable statistics. Several investigators report their results in frequency distributions of happiness, split up for other variables. Such tables do not allow comparison with other studies very easily. Moreover they are too voluminous to be inserted in the excerpts. Therefore I reduced the data reported in such tables by computing association values. As most of the tables contained data at the ordinal level of measurement, I computed Gamma's. In the excerpts these values are marked with an accent (G'). In cases where no Gamma's could be computed due to lack of information, it sufficed to indicate the direction of the statistical relation as shown in the table (+ or -).

Measures of association. Most investigators computed association values themselves, generally product-moments correlations (rpm). Unfortunately there are various measures of association. These measures are based on slightly different assumptions about the mathematical qualities of the data and for that reason they are not quite comparable. This is a serious problem to which I have not found an adequate answer. The best I could do was to record the statistical measures used in each case and to sketch their characteristics in an appendix. See Databook, appendix B.

Though varying somewhat in their methods and assumptions, most measures of association are nevertheless expressed in values ranging from zero to one. For all measures the value of 'zero' implies absence of any common variance whereas the value of 'one' implies absolute association. The meaning of the interjacent values may differ however. Gamma of +.30 does not always reflect the same correspondence between two variables as an ' r^2 ' of +.30. Yet standardized measures of association permit at least a rough comparison.

Unfortunately not all measures of association are expressed in standardized values ranging from zero to one. The much used 'Chi²' for example has a theoretical range from zero to infinite. In these cases comparison is even more hazardous. I therefore decided not to mention such values in the excerpts, but simply to note the direction of the statistical relationship. For the same reason I did not mention differences in means. The noting of a '+' or '-' had to suffice.

Still another problem is that correlations tend to be higher when aggregated data are concerned (e.g. happiness averages of nations) than when applied to observations at the individual level. (Robinson, 1950). Again I could do no more than warn the reader when such differences hinder comparison. (See introduction to section 6/2).

Test-statistics. Several investigators tried to establish whether the association values found were 'significant' or not. (Mostly significantly different from an eventual zero association in the population the sample was drawn from). For that purpose they again used a great variety of methods which are not quite comparable either. These test statistics are summarized in appendix C of the Databook.

This problem of incomparability of statistics imposed serious limitations when I tried to interpret the various findings. Quite often it restrained me from concluding that happiness was more strongly related to some factor in one population than in another.

b. Excerpting the reports

The excerpts were not exactly 'summaries'. They were not meant to cover all the issues the author has raised, but focused exclusively on his empirical observations about happiness. The excerpts were made by means of a notation sheet. A completed notation sheet is shown in exhibit 5/3b on page 130-131.

The report dealt with there is an article by Thompson et al. (1960). As noted above all the technical terms used in these excerpts are explained in appendix A of the Databook. I saw to it that the excerpts reflected all the findings mentioned in the reports, not only the findings that were stressed by the author and not only those that seemed most relevant to me. I did not restrict myself to significant correlations either; insignificant ones and non-correlations were noted as well. This required a careful inspection of both the text and the tables in the reports.

Excerpting involves the possibility of making mistakes, in particular of selective attention and theoretically guided misperception. Therefore each report was excerpted twice by two different excerpters. The excerpts were then compared and differences settled on the basis of a careful re-examination of the report. In cases where the author(s) could be traced, the excerpt was also sent to him (them) for inspection. Together 120 were sent out to 93 authors of which 73 were returned by 55 authors. Several of the latter enclosed additional information that had not been published in their excerpted report. Where it concerned happiness that information was added.

Close reading of the reports revealed many defects. Relevant information was often found to be missing and several reports appeared to contain mistakes. If possible the author was consulted. The correct information was then included in the excerpt.

Altogether these excerpts ran to some 400 pages. That was too much to print. The excerpts in Part II of the Databook are therefore short ones. The actual findings are omitted, because these appear in another context in the Databook (in Part III and IV). Thus the shortened excerpts reflect only the design of the investigation and its conclusion.

Not all reports were excerpted, only the 179 reports that pre sent 'correlates' of happiness. As noted there are also 66 reports on investigations that assessed the 'distribution' of happiness in certain national populations, mostly highly standardized opinion polls. Their results are presented separately in the Databook (Part IV).

The excerpting of the reports turned out to be a laborious job; not the excerpting as such, but rather the development of a manageable vocabulary and rules. All in all it took two full man-years; one for Ton Jonkers and one for myself.

c. Classifying the findings

Together the reports appeared to contain more than 3500 correlates of happiness; too much to survey: The next problem was hence to categorize these abundant findings conveniently. When sorting out the findings I took care not to squeeze them into conceptual categories of some a priori theory of happiness. Rather I tried to figure out which categorization would show the wealth of data to its fullest advantage.

Thus I arrived at forty-one main categories which I ordered alphabetically. These main categories were subdivided into so me two hundred further ones. The resulting classification is

Exhibit 5/3b

Atypical excerpt

AUTHOR: Thompson, W.E., Streib, G.F. & Kosa, J.

THOMP 60

TITLE: The effect of retirement on personal adjustment: a panel analysis.

SOURCE: Journal of Gerontology, 1960; vol. 15, nr. 2, p. 165-169.

GOAL OF THE STUDY: Test and specification of assumed negative relation between retirement and personal adjustment.

REFERS TO: Theory of adjustment among retirees; Havighurst & Albrecht (1953); Kutner et al. (1956).

TYPE OF STUDY: explanatory, explorative, special group, longitudinal, non-experimental

DATA GATHERING: Structured interview administered at the respondent's place of work, followed by 2 mailed questionnaires at one or two years interval.

DATE OF DATA: 1952 - 1956

POPULATION: Aged males, USA

SAMPLE CONSTRUCTION: Non-probability accidental sample using volunteers. All males were born in 1887, 1888 or 1889; relatively more prosperous and better educated individuals from relatively larger, more affluent and more progressive organizations from all parts of the country; 1082 Ss gainfully employed throughout and 477 Ss retired between 1952-1954

NON-RESPONSE:

REMARKS: The publication focuses on longitudinal changes in satisfaction with life rather than on correlates of present satisfaction with life. Compared were persons satisfied in 1952 who became dissatisfied in 1954 (N=788) and persons dissatisfied in 1952 who became satisfied in 1954 (N=771). For our purpose we computed correlates of satisfaction with life in 1954, when possible we made elaborations for satisfaction with life in 1952.

N: 1559

LABEL: Satisfaction with life

INSTRUMENT: COMP 1.2: Index of closed questions (devised through the use of the Guttman (1944) scaling technique):

- All in all, how much happiness would you say you find in life today? (negative response: 'almost none' or 'some , but not very much')
- In general, how would you say you feel most of the time, in good spirits or in low spirits? (negative response: 'I'm usually in low spirits' or 'sometimes in good spirits, sometimes in low spirits')
- On the whole, how satisfied would you say you are with your way of life today? (negative response: 'fairly satisfied', 'not very satisfied' or 'not satisfied at all')

RELIABILITY: Reproducibility: +.96
Error Ratio : +.55

VALIDITY:

DISTRIBUTION: Almost symmetric: in 1952: 51% satisfied, 49% dissatisfied
in 1954: 43% satisfied, 57% dissatisfied

page	association		significance		correlates of happiness found	conceptualization	operationalization	elaboration/remarks
	mea- sure	value	test	p (%)				
167	G ¹	-.07	Gt ¹	ns	Retirement	Gainfully employed vs retired between 1952 and 1954	Among those who were satisfied in 1952 Among those who were dissatisfied in 1952	: G ¹ = -.21 : G ¹ = +.11

						When the gainfully employed were compared with retirees who had a positive orientation towards retirement before they were retired : $G' = +.13$ When the gainfully employed were compared with retirees who had a negative pre-retirement attitude towards retirement : $G' = -.27$ Unaffected by voluntary vs compulsory retirement.
168	G'	$-.00$	01	Compulsory retirement	Voluntary vs administrative retirement	Computed for those who retired between 1952 and 1954 only.. Unaffected by pre-retirement attitude towards retirement.
158	G'	$+.40$	Gt'	01	Positive pre-retirement attitude towards retirement	3-item index of closed questions indicating a negative vs a positive orientation towards retirement Computed for those who had retired between 1952 and 1954 only.
168	G'	$-.55$	Gt'	01	Economic deprivation	not deprived vs economically deprived Computed for those who were satisfied in 1952 only. Among the gainfully employed : $G' = -.56(01)$ Among retirees who had a positive pre-retirement attitude towards retirement : $G' = -.53(01)$ Among retirees who had a negative pre-retirement attitude towards retirement : $G' = -.34(ns)$
168	G'	$+.58$	Gt'	01	Subjective health	poor vs good Computed For those who were satisfied in 1952 only. Among the gainfully employed : $G' = +.65(01)$ Among retirees who had a positive pre-retirement attitude towards retirement : $G' = +.48(01)$ Among retirees who had a negative pre-retirement attitude towards retirement : $G' = +.23(ns)$
168	G'	$-.49$	Gt'	01	Having difficulties in keeping occupied	Closed question: no vs yes Computed for those who were satisfied in 1952 only. Among the gainfully employed : $G' = -.43(01)$ Among retirees who had a positive pre-retirement attitude towards retirement : $G' = -.38(05)$ Among retirees who had a negative pre-retirement attitude towards retirement : $G' = -.64(01)$

CONCLUSIONS: In general, retirement appears to have a negative effect on personal adjustment only when retirement is involuntary and economic deprivation is felt. The findings do suggest that the work-role is not as central to the personality as many writers would contend.

presented in an appendix on p. 405 to 411 of this volume. In classifying the correlates by subject-matter, I ignored the theoretical labels the investigators had attached to them, but focused on what they had actually observed. Several findings appeared to fit in more than one category in my classification and were hence presented more than once in the Databook.

Presentation in the Databook. When classifying findings of different investigations in subject categories, I could obviously not obliterate their contextual differences. Hence I did not merely list statistics, but presented each finding with shorthand information about indicators and the population. See exhibit 5/3c which shows a typical page from Part III of the Databook.

This page summarizes the findings on the relationship between happiness and 'physical health'. The code numbers in the headline refer to the classification shown in the appendix. The horizontal columns summarize information drawn from the excerpt as shown in 5/3b. The first vertical column records how the variable concerned was labeled by the investigator. The second column notes how that variable was actually measured. The third column presents eventual elaborations that were made by the investigator. If left blank the investigator made do with zero-order correlations. Eventual remarks are also presented in this column. The fourth column contains codes referring to the kind of happiness measures used: 'HAPP' meaning 'overall happiness', 'AFF' 'hedonic level of affect'. These codes are the ones contained in exhibit 5/2c. The fifth column notes the measure of association used. (Symbols are explained in appendix 8 of the Databook). The sixth column notes the degree of statistical association observed and its direction. The seventh column reports the test statistics used. (Symbols explained in appendix C of the Databook) The eighth column mentions the resulting 'p' value. (Chance that the association is in fact zero). If these latter two columns are left blank no test for significance was carried out. Almost at the right side of the page column nine describes shortly which population was studied, what kind of sample was involved and when the data were gathered. Finally the last column mentions the source. The reader who wants more information can revert to the excerpt in Part II of the Databook, or even to the original report. To that end column ten also mentions the page in the original report.

This job again required a lot of work, especially the setting up of a classification. It took another full year to organize the data conveniently. Again Ton Jonkers did part of that work. Finally a 320 page inventory of correlational findings resulted (part III of the Databook) and another dozen pages with frequency distributions in national populations (part IV). Thus a bookcase

full of different reports was reduced to a one-inch-thick systematic volume. This reduction did not involve a loss of essential information, at least not as far as empirical data about happiness were concerned.

Classification for the next chapters. Though more manageable than the mountain of original reports, the resulting 335-page inventory was still too detailed to allow a general view. In the following chapters I will try to distill it further. For that purpose I will order the findings into a few main categories. I do so on the basis of two criteria.

First I distinguish between 'external' conditions (sometimes referred to as 'environmental', 'situational' or 'objective') and internal ones (sometimes labeled as 'personal' or 'psychological' and in some contexts as 'subjective').

Secondly I distinguish between present conditions and past ones; in technical language between 'concurrent' conditions of happiness and 'antecedent' ones.

Findings on 'present external' conditions of happiness will be presented in chapter 6 and the findings on 'present internal' ones in chapter 7. 'Antecedents' of happiness will be discussed in chapter 8. Section 8/1 of that chapter will deal with 'past external' conditions and section 8/2 with 'past internal' conditions.

Though theoretically clear this classification is not entirely watertight. It was sometimes difficult to characterize variables as either 'external' or 'internal'. This is most apparent in the case of 'social ties'. Relations to other people represent both an external reality to the individual, but are to some extent also part of his own mind. I opted to include these matters in chapter 6. Consequently I chose a somewhat broader title for that chapter: 'happiness and living-conditions'. Another problem with this classification is that it may be difficult to distinguish between 'present' and 'past' conditions. When must the 'past' begin? Fortunately the data at hand do not raise any problem of that kind.

The following chapters being based on the summary of findings in the Databook, the reader will find a reference to the page concerned by all the readings. For this purpose the code numbers of the subject matters are mentioned between brackets in the headings. The code numbers involved are the same ones we met in the appendix.

5/4 LIMITATIONS OF THE DATA

Before I proceed with summarizing the findings, some critical remarks about their quality are due. Valid conclusions can be drawn only if the limitations

H2 HEALTH AND HEALTHCARE

- # 2.1 Physical health
 - 2.1.1 Expert ratings of general health
 - 2.1.2 Self-perceived general health
 - 2.1.3 Various indicators of physical health see also # 2.7.6, 5.1.8
 - 2.1.4 Specific physical health characteristics see also # 2.2
- # 2.2 Psychosomatic symptoms see also # 2.7.20
- # 2.3 Mental health see also # 2.2, 1.2, 1.1, 4.3, 5.7

- 2.3.1 General mental health ratings
- 2.3.2 Specific mental health characteristics
- 2.3.3 Being treated for mental illness
- # 2.4 Longevity
- # 2.5 Various factors concerning health
- # 2.6 Healthcare

H 2.1 - PHYSICAL HEALTH

H 2.1.1 - EXPERT RATINGS OF GENERAL HEALTH

PERFORMANCE STATUS (PHYSICAL HEALTH)	Rating given by a physician based on his examination, the medical history, and the results of laboratory tests. The ratings had a theoretical range of 1 for 'unaffected; fatal processes progressing rapidly' to 10 for 'normal; no complaints; no evidence of disease'.	Unaffected by sex and age	HAPP 1.1	r	+0.11		People of 45 and older, Duke, U.S.A. Probability systematic random sample stratified by age and sex N: 500, date: 1968	FINNO 77 p. 70	
PHYSICAL HEALTH	Physician's ratings: very poor / poor / fair / good / excellent	The relationship disappears when controlled for self-rated general health and self-rated health problems.	HAPP 1.1	G	+0.18	G ¹	ns	Aged persons, U.S.A. Non-probability quota sample N: 2993, date: 1957 - 1958	SCOED 58 p. 227
PHYSIQUE (SOUNDNESS OF BODY / CONSTITUTION)	Rating by a visiting doctor and by the lecturer in physical exercises and hygiene		MF 5.7	r	+0.30			Male students, England Non-probability chunk sample N: 196, date: 1912 - 1913	WEBB 15 p. 26
PHYSIQUE (SOUNDNESS OF BODY / CONSTITUTION)	Class-master rating on a 3-point scale on the basis of observation		MF 5.2	r	+0.11			Schoolboys, England Non-probability chunk sample N: 140, date: 1917 - 1918	WEBB 15 p. 27
PHYSICAL STRENGTH	Rating by staff members on a 4-point scale ranging from 'physically weak' to 'physically strong'	Open word: r = +0.27 (m) Closed word: r = +0.04 (m)	MF 5.1	r	ns		ns	Institutionalized mentally retarded males, U.S.A. Non-probability chunk sample N: 143, date: —	FINNO 71 p. 329
SELF-PERCEIVED HEALTH	Closed question: poor / fair / good		HAPP 1.1	G	+0.11	G ¹	01	National adult population, U.S.A. Non-probability quota sample N: 2322, date: February, 1968	WISER 56 p. 178
SELF-PERCEIVED HEALTH	Closed question: poor / fair / good / excellent	Lower among those under the age of 45: r = +0.22 Stronger among those of age 65: r = +0.40 The difference between the correlations is statistically significant (P5). Unaffected by S.C.S.	HAPP 1.1	r	+0.28		01	Non-institutionalized adults, U.S.A. Probability sample N: 1947, date: 1972, 1973	SWEL 74 p. 451

PHYSICAL ALIGNMENT	Number of medical conditions reported 0 / 1 / 2 / 3 / 4 / 5+	Positive relationship with the Index of Negative Affects Unrelated to the Index of Positive Affects	HAPP 1.1	G ²	+0.28	G ²	01	National adult population, Puerto Rico Probability simple random sample N: 1417, date: November, 1961 - January, 1964 and August - October, 1964	WATLI 68 p. 25/30
SELF-PERCEIVED HEALTH	Closed question: poor / fair / good / excellent	Stronger among those of age 70-79: $G^2 = +.59$ Lower among those of age 40: $G^2 = +.31$	HAPP 1.1	G ²	+0.47	G ²	01	See above	WATLI 68 p. 26-31
SELF-PERCEIVED PHYSICAL HEALTH	Closed question: poor / not so good / pretty good / very good	Index of Negative Affects only Index of Positive Affects: $r = +.18$ (01) Index of Negative Affects: $r = -.23$ (01)	HAPP 2.3	G ²	+0.40	G ²	01	See above	WATLI 68 p. 26-31
SUBJECTIVE HEALTH STATUS	Closed question: poor / fair / good / excellent	Index of Negative Affects only Index of Positive Affects: $r = +.18$ (01) Index of Negative Affects: $r = -.23$ (01)	HAPP 2.3	r ns	+0.78	Chi ²	01	Adults, Houston, Texas, U.S.A. Non-probability purposive quota sample stratified by age, sex, occupational skill level and ethnicity N: 744, date: autumn, 1969	GAITZ 72 p. 85
SELF-RATED HEALTH	Direct question rated on a 10-point self-anchoring scale (based on Cantrell, 1965), with the bottom of the ladder representing the most serious illness and the top of the ladder representing perfect health.	Unaffected by sex and age	COMP 1.1	r ns	+0.36	Chi ²	01	Families of hourly workers and salaried employees, U.S.A. N: 717, date: summer, 1971	ITSSU 75 p. 103
SELF-RATED HEALTH	Closed question: poor / fair / good / excellent	Unaffected by sex and age	HAPP 3.1	r	+0.43		05	People of 46 and older, Duke, U.S.A. Probability systematic random sample stratified by age and sex N: 507, date: 1968	PAIRD 77 p. 70
SELF-RATED GENERAL HEALTH	Closed question: very poor / poor / fair / good / excellent	Unaffected by physician's health rating, and self-rated health problems	HAPP 1.1	G ²	+0.48	G ²	01	See above	PAIRD 77 p. 73
REPORTED HEALTH	Direct question	Unaffected by income and social participation	HAPP 1.1	G ²	+0.48	G ²	01	Aged persons, U.S.A. Non-probability quota sample N: 2793, date: 1952 - 1954	STONM 58 p. 227
SELF-PERCEIVED HEALTH	Closed question: poor / fair / good	Unaffected by income and social participation	W3 1.1	r	+0.48	Chi ²	4	Aged persons, Metropolitan Boston, U.S.A. Probability area sample N: 1325, date: 1965	FOBLE 86 p. 376
SELF-PERCEIVED HEALTH	Closed question: poor / fair / good	Unaffected by income and social participation	HAPP 2.3	G	+0.45	Chi ²	001	Non-institutionalized aged welfare recipients, U.S.A. Non-probability purposive quota sample N: 756, date: 1969	ITSSU 77 p. 97
SUBJECTIVE HEALTH	poor vs good	See remarks in excerpt (Part II) Among the gainfully employed: $G^2 = +.85$ (01) Among retirees who had a positive orientation to retirement: $G^2 = +.46$ (01) Among retirees who had a negative orientation to retirement: $G^2 = +.23$ (ns)	HAPP 1.1	E	+0.17	Chi ²	ns	Aged males, U.S.A. (those satisfied in 1952) Non-probability accidental sample N: 787, date: 1952 - 1954	THOMP 60 p. 166
SELF-PERCEIVED HEALTH	Direct question rated on a 10-point self-anchoring scale (based on Cantrell, 1965), ranging from 'worst possible health' to 'best possible health'	See remarks in excerpt (Part II) Among the gainfully employed: $G^2 = +.85$ (01) Among retirees who had a positive orientation to retirement: $G^2 = +.46$ (01) Among retirees who had a negative orientation to retirement: $G^2 = +.23$ (ns)	COMP 1.1	r ns	+0.67		01	White males who had experienced a first heart attack. Durham, North Carolina, U.S.A. Non-probability quota sample N: 58, date: 1970	CAMBI 77 p. 201
SELF-PERCEIVED HEALTH	Closed question: poor, fair vs good, very good	See remarks in excerpt (Part II) Among the gainfully employed: $G^2 = +.85$ (01) Among retirees who had a positive orientation to retirement: $G^2 = +.46$ (01) Among retirees who had a negative orientation to retirement: $G^2 = +.23$ (ns)	HAPP 2.1	G ²	+0.47	G ²	01	Aged chronically-ill patients, U.S.A. Probability sample N: 187, date: 1959	HEML 61 p. 70

of the data are sufficiently recognized. Most of the data at hand are subject to the typical limitations of correlational survey studies; the following ones must be noted:

Statistical aggregation clouds individual differences. The studies at hand did not consider individuals, but compared categories. They distinguish between 'happy' and 'unhappy' people and investigated whether some characteristics are more frequent among the former than among the latter. As such they allow a view on the features of differences in happiness, but they give little insight in what actually goes on in individuals. For instance, the fact that happy people get on better with their spouse on average, does not mean that marriage plays an identical role in everyone's life. Some may primarily profit from the marital relationship because it provides 'social recognition', while others depend on its supply of 'emotional support'. This objection applies more to investigations that merely establish zero-order correlations than to the ones that analyze their data multi-variantly; specifications provide often more indications on the matter, in particular where psychological variables are involved. Unfortunately the bulk of the findings consists of zero-order correlations.

Another problem with these investigations is that they tend to overemphasize the modal pattern and thus lose sight of the exceptions. Noting that married people are usually happier than unmarried ones, some authors forget, that there are still many happy single ones and that many married people are actually unhappy because of marital problems.

Technical differences hamper comparison. Comparison of the different findings is hampered by several things.

Firstly, the investigations did not use identical indicators of happiness. Though the rigorous selection for validity in chapter 4 guarantees that all indicate 'happiness', an unknown amount of instrument variance still remains.

Secondly, the investigators processed their data differently. Data were not categorized uniformly and a great variety of statistical methods was used in assessing the degree of correspondence. Therefore we often cannot judge whether the correspondence between happiness and a certain variable found in one investigation is weaker or stronger than a correlation with that same variable established in another.

Comparison is also impeded by differences in sampling techniques, non-response rates, questionnaire designs and interviewing techniques. Quite often this means that observations on the same subject matter cannot be compared. A serious loss of information!

Incomparable entities. Cross-cultural comparison is further hampered by the fact that seemingly identical independent variables are sometimes not of the same kind. There are for example investigations that related happiness to the 'size of the town' lived in. When comparing the results one must realize that big cities in 'developed' countries are quite different from big cities in the 'underdeveloped' countries. Hence one cannot say meaningfully that 'size of town' relates differently to happiness in the former countries than in the latter, the subject matter being in fact incomparable.

Correlates are no causes. On the whole, investigators have tried to identify matters that make for happiness by inspecting what is correlated with it. Thus many ignored the following problems:

Firstly, surprisingly few have recognized that statistical correspondence may be artefactual: that it may be due to parallel measurement bias or that correlations can be spurious. If recognized at all, this complication was usually only paid lip service. Very few investigators conscientiously examined the tenability of the correlations they found. When discussing the data in the following chapters, I will therefore consider that matter systematically.

Secondly, sound correlations do not guarantee that a 'cause' of happiness has been identified. Causality can work in the other direction. If differences in happiness appear to correspond with, for instance, differences in 'income', it does not necessarily imply that income makes for happiness; the correlation can also mean that unhappiness reduces earning power. (Discussed in more detail in section 6/2.1). In some cases it is rather evident that causality can work in one way only. It is for example unlikely that colored people in the US are less happy because dissatisfaction turns their skin darker. (More detail in section 6/2.3). Nor is it plausible that the relatively lower happiness of people in poor countries results from a tendency of the happy to move away. (See section 6/1.1). Yet in most cases effects in both directions are possible, especially where correlations with personal characteristics are concerned.

To some extent such causal interactions can be unraveled by means of longitudinal or experimental investigations. Unfortunately only a few such studies have been carried out as yet, the bulk consisting of simple synchronic ones. In the following chapters I will systematically pay attention to this matter as well. The few non-synchronic investigations that are available will be shown to be very valuable.

Even if there is no doubt that a certain correlation reflects an effect on happiness rather than the reverse, the correlation still does not tell us how the variable concerned affects happiness. Simple direct effects can be involved,

but also more indirect ones, sometimes part of complex causal 'chains'. Statistical elaboration can sometimes help to unravel such sequences. If, for example, one wants to explain the relative unhappiness of colored people in the US by their lower purchasing power, the statistical differences between black and white must disappear when statistically verified for 'income'. (This appears not to be the case -see 6/2.3). Unfortunately for most investigators zero-order correlations sufficed. The following chapters will therefore take full advantage of the few investigations that took a further look.

Uneven spreading of research efforts. A final noteworthy item is that the investigations here at hand have not been directed by some master plan of happiness research, but result from loose initiatives, which were at best geared somewhat to passing scientific fashions. Part of the investigators did not even focus on 'happiness' primarily, but used it as a variable in the study of other matters, such as 'adjustment' or 'health'.

Moreover, the investigators who did aim at identifying conditions of happiness were badly informed about earlier research. The benefits of this inventory were clearly not yet imparted to them. As a result there is much overlap in the data, while at the same time there are many blank spots. There is for instance ample information about the relationship between happiness and matters as 'age', 'gender' and 'education', whereas very little information has been gathered on its relation to 'social mobility' and 'political ideology'. (See appendix). It is particularly disturbing to see that the investigations are so concentrated in the western world. The possibilities for cross-cultural comparison are therefore very limited. Yet we will see in the next chapters that the few studies that do allow cross-cultural comparison are quite enlightening.

Still worthwhile? In spite of their limitations the data can still teach us a lot about happiness. As will appear in the following chapters, they allow the identification of a handful of things that clearly contribute to the appreciation of life in contemporary society. They do not only demonstrate that these conditions really favor happiness, but in some cases they also specify circumstances in which such effects are most pronounced and involve suggestions about the causal mechanism involved. More often than not, the correlations do not allow such insights, but even so they provide useful indications and guidelines for further research. In any case the data will prove sufficiently dependable to refute many established ideas about happiness: popular beliefs as well as scientific opinions.

5/5 SUMMARY

Having established which indicators of happiness are acceptable, the next step was to take stock of the investigations that actually used them. Therefore I tried to gather all empirical investigations in the field up to and including 1975. This was not an easy job. Many relevant reports had not been included in any international reference system and terms like 'happiness' were not yet currently used in quick indices. A laborious search yielded some thousand promising titles. All these reports were inspected. Only 150 appeared to concern investigations that had used acceptable indicators of happiness. Together these publications covered 156 research projects in 245 different samples. Though probably incomplete, this harvest is richer than that of any earlier literature surveys.

The earliest empirical happiness investigations were performed in the 1910's among students and focused on hedonic level. After World War II their number increased rapidly and the emphasis shifted to overall happiness in national surveys. The increase in happiness studies parallels the growth of social research as such.

More than half of the investigations were performed in the US and a quarter in western Europe. In other parts of the world only a few have been carried out as yet. Almost half of the investigations was based on probability samples in national populations, the other half concerning mainly regional populations, aged people and students.

Most investigations focused on 'overall happiness', generally measured by single direct questions using keywords such as 'happiness' and 'satisfaction with life'. Almost one-third dealt with 'hedonic level', mostly measured by direct questions on general mood and by summed specific affect scores. Only a few investigations assessed 'contentment'.

Part of the haul (66) consists of studies which merely count the number of happy and unhappy persons in a country. The bulk (179) assesses also whether some characteristics are more frequent among the former than among the latter. Most of these latter studies make do with zero-order correlations, but quite a few have gone into statistical specifications, though generally not very far. Eight longitudinal investigations excepted, all the studies are synchronic ones.

The pile of reports thus gathered was almost impossible to handle, because of the enormous variation in presentation, language and technical jargon. The

reports were therefore excerpted uniformly in terms of a carefully defined technical vocabulary. All reports were considered by two independent excerpters. As far as possible the excerpts were checked by the original investigators. In some cases they were supplemented by unpublished information. Abridged versions of these excerpts are printed in a separate volume, named 'Databook of Happiness' which is published together with this book. (See part II of the Databook).

Then the separate findings were drawn from these excerpts and classified by subject matter. More than four-thousand were involved. The presentation of these findings took 335 pages of tables. These pages are also printed in the Databook; the correlational findings in part II and the data on the distributions of happiness in various countries in part III.

Thus a bookcase full of rather diverse and often chaotic reports was reduced to a convenient one- inch-thick inventory. This process did not involve any loss of empirical information. In its turn the inventory served as a basis for the following chapters of this book.

Though very abundant at first sight, the findings cover a rather limited field. While there is much information about differences in happiness among American college students, we know little about its variation in Third World countries. Many investigations focused on the same variables, while many potentially promising factors were left unconsidered. The usefulness of the findings is limited in another sense as well. The bulk consists of simple synchronic zero-order correlations, which provide no definite answers to questions of causality. Much of the common variance with happiness may be due to parallel response bias and to spuriousness. Yet the data will appear to be sufficiently dependable to allow the conclusive identification of at least a handful of conditions of happiness in contemporary society and to make a clean sweep among current beliefs on the matter.

CHAPTER 6

HAPPINESS AND LIVING CONDITIONS

A great many investigators inspected whether differences in the appreciation of life go together with actual differences in living conditions. Two views instigated their research. Most were convinced that a person's appreciation of life is based on the 'quality' of his living conditions and aimed at identifying the ones that are most crucial. They hoped to find clues for drawing the blueprint of a better society. On the other hand a few started from the assumption that happiness is a rather relative matter: that it results from the perception of being relatively 'well-off' rather than being dependent on the actual quality of living conditions. They hoped to demonstrate that people tend to be equally happy in foul and fair. More sophisticated investigators in this tradition tried to assess the 'degree' to which happiness is situation-bound.

The resulting investigations yielded a wealth of data, which can be grouped in four main categories. I will begin with the ones that concern the link between the happiness of individuals and the characteristics of the society they live in; findings about differences in average happiness of citizens between societies. (Section 6/1). Secondly I will discuss the correspondence between appreciation of life and one's place within society. I will do so by comparing the happiness of people of different 'age', 'gender', 'income', 'education' and 'rank'. (Section 6/2). Thirdly I will review the findings on the

relationship between happiness and work. (Section 6/3), followed by a section on happiness and *intimate ties*. (Section 6/4).

The data are too abundant to be reported in detail. Hence it will suffice to mention the main findings. More detailed information can be found in the Databook. Finding places in that volume are mentioned between brackets next to the section titles. Some of the findings reported in this chapter are not summarized in the Databook because they were published after 1975. In these cases the source is mentioned in this text.

6/1 HAPPINESS AND SOCIETY

Of the 245 investigations considered in this book, 131 assessed how happy people are in particular countries. Their findings are summarized in part IV of the Databook. Taken separately these observations are not very interesting. For instance we are not any wiser by knowing that most of the inhabitants of the Netherlands considered themselves 'very happy' in 1975; it brings us no further in identifying 'conditions of happiness'. To that end these findings are of interest only insofar as they allow comparison. If people appear happier in one nation than in another, we may find clues by inspecting the differences between these two nations. If in a certain country happiness rose or declined through time, an analysis of corresponding changes in living conditions can yield indications as well.

Unfortunately the available data leave little opportunity for comparison. There is little uniformity in the questions used and the investigations are badly distributed across nations (most are western) and time (all from the last few decades). Though limited in number there are nevertheless some investigations that can be compared.

Comparison between nations. Four investigations used identical questions in different nations. The first of these is one by Buchanan & Cantril (1953) in 1948, covering adults in Australia, Britain, France, Germany, Italy, Mexico, the Netherlands and Norway. A second cross-national happiness study was performed in 1960 by Cantril (Cantril 1965). This study was meant to cover the entire world population and was based on representative samples in five 'westernized nations' (US, Western Germany, Yugoslavia, Poland, Japan), three 'underdeveloped giants' (Brasil, India, Nigeria), two 'middle east nations' (Egypt and Israel), three Caribbean nations' (Cuba, the Dominican Republic, Panama), and the Philippines. Fifteen years later (1975)

the Kettering Foundation sponsored another worldwide happiness investigation, which involved representative samples in all parts of the world, the Communist world excepted (Gallup, 1976). Though this latter investigation did not aim at drawing representative samples from nations, several nations were sufficiently well sampled to be considered separately. Finally Inglehart (1977) reported an investigation in all EC countries in 1975, which is part of a continuous quality-of-life survey program of the European Commission.

Of these four investigations, the Kettering/Gallup study is the most representative of the world population. Its findings are presented in exhibit 6/1a on page 145. The differences in average happiness that appear there are largely similar to the ones found in the other studies. The earlier investigation of Buchanan & Cantril in 1948 and of Cantril in 1960 also found more happiness in western nations than in non-western ones, and within the western world it found more happiness in Australia, the US and Scandinavia than in France. The simultaneous study of Inglehart found similar differences between Western European nations.

Cross-national comparison involves several particular measurement problems. One such problem is that translation may cause questions to have slightly different connotations in one country than in another. This problem has been found to be minimal. In Western Europe at least, Inglehart (1977:154/6) found no differences in the responses of Flemish and French speaking Belgians nor between Swiss respondents of different tongues. Even if such differences still exist in other countries, it would be an odd coincidence if they involved more negative answers in non-western nations than in western ones.

A second problem is that the very concept of happiness may be more current in the western world. Reactions to the questions might therefore be more positive there, non-western people tending to react more reservedly to questions on so alien an idea. If this is true, we could expect more non-response in non-western nations. As shown in the exhibit, this is not the case. The absence of a difference in non-response is not a matter of non-western people being too polite not to answer. Various other questions that met with high non-response in the West were left unanswered by many non-Western respondents as well (e.g. Q30 and Q33 in Gallup/Kettering summary report). If differences in familiarity with the concept of happiness do play a role, we could also expect the cross-national differences to be sharper where questions using the term 'happiness' are concerned. Comparison of the distribution of responses to the various questions in the Kettering/Gallup survey shows that this is not the case either.

A third problem is that cultures differ in their moral appreciation of happiness. Desirability bias could therefore work differently in one country than in the other. In a country where being happy is praised as a desirable quality, both awareness and response could be biased positively, whereas in a country where suffering is idealized, negative bias could prevail. In this context the high scores in the US can be regarded with some suspicion, the 'grin and bear it' philosophy being typical of the American way of life. However, exhibit 6/1a shows high scores in Australia and Scandinavia as well. These countries are not reputed to require false cheerfulness, especially not the latter. In order to assess more systematically to what extent the differences in the exhibit might be due to such effects, we should first of all establish how happiness is valued in each of the regions. Unfortunately such data are not available as yet. For the time being we must do with the earlier observation that — at least in the US — differences in the perceived desirability of happiness do not seem to influence responses to questions about the appreciation of life to a large extent. Remember section 3/1f.

A fourth problem could be that differences in the inclination to be out-of-the-ordinary play a role. In an effort to account for the relatively low happiness scores in Japan, Kenji Iijima (1982:5/6) suggests that Japanese society places a premium on modesty among its members and that this would give rise to 'in between' responses. In support of this claim he demonstrates that the Japanese score more frequently on the middle categories than any other people. Though interesting, this fact does not convincingly prove the point: The Japanese may actually be more alike and more in between.

Finally a word about the high level of happiness in Scandinavia. The Scandinavian countries being known for their high incidence of suicide, one might be inclined to doubt the validity of these data. In this context it is worth noting that suicide rates say little about average happiness in a country. There are great cultural differences in the individual's inclination to resort to suicide in cases of chronic unhappiness. Consequently there exists hardly any correspondence between average happiness in the countries reviewed and current suicide rates ($r = + .24$ ns, table not shown). Note that the correlation is positive rather than negative. This is partly due to the fact that suicide is more frequent in affluent countries. Yet when the latter were considered apart no negative correlation appeared either ($r = + .12$ ns, in the EC in 1975).

Comparison through time. Several investigators have wisely used questions that figured in earlier investigations in the same nation and could thus assess whether happiness had risen or declined. Some of the findings are presented

Exhibit 6/1a**Overall happiness in different parts of the world.**

<i>Area/Country</i>	<i>Proportions</i>				<i>means</i>
	<i>high</i> <i>(7-10)</i>	<i>middle</i> <i>(4-6)</i>	<i>low</i> <i>(0-3)</i>	<i>no</i> <i>answer</i>	
Australia	62	35	3	0	7.0
North America	56	37	6	1	6.7
US	56	37	6	1	6.7
Canada	63	34	3	0	7.0
Western Europe	45	46	8	1	6.3
Great Britain	53	45	2	0	6.8
France	36	53	12	0	5.8
Western Germany	50	43	3	4	6.6
Italy	32	52	16	0	5.6
Benelux	43	47	10	0	6.0
Scandinavia	78	19	3	0	7.6
Latin America	44	43	13	0	6.0
Brasil	42	48	10	0	6.2
Mexico	42	51	7	0	6.2
Africa (South of the Sahara)	17	55	28	0	4.6
Asia (exc. Japan)	10	41	48	1	3.8
India	7	36	55	2	3.4
Japan	32	58	10	0	5.8

Question: 'To indicate how you feel about your life at this time, would you use this card? Suppose the top of the mountain represents the best life you can imagine, and the bottom step of the mountain represents the worst possible life you can imagine. On which step of the mountain would you say you personally feel you stand at this time? - assuming that the higher the step the better you feel about your life, and the lower the step the worse you feel about it Just point to the step that comes closest to how you feel'.

Source: Gallup/Kettering summary report Q6A

in exhibit 6/1b. Next to minor changes they show a striking stability in average happiness. There are more detailed time trend data based on other questions: for the US between 1946 and 1977 (Smith, 1979) and for Western Germany between 1954 and 1976 (Noelle-Neuman, 1977:210). The trends that show up there are similar to the ones in the exhibit.

To some extent non-identical questions allow comparison through time as well. When the same happiness question was used in several nations at the same time and another question in the same nations some time later, we can at least compare the happiness hierarchies that appeared. Below I will do so by estimating the sequel of World War II. (See section 6/ 1.3a)

Exhibit 6/1b.

Changes in average happiness in nations in the postwar decades.

	<i>1960</i> <i>Average</i>	<i>1975</i> <i>Average ladder rating</i> <i>ladder rating</i>
Brasil	4.6	6.2
India	3.7	3.4
Japan	5.2	5.8
US	6.6	6.7
Western Germany	5.3	6.6

Question: Cantril questions presented in exhibit 4/1.a

Source: Data 1960 Cantril (1965:184); Data 1975 Gallup (1976:465).

Identifying underlying social system characteristics. Most investigators merely established that people are not equally happy in all nations at all times. Only a few wondered why. In fact surprisingly little effort has been spent in tracing the social system characteristics that are responsible for these striking differences. The differences have as yet only instigated some discussion about the impact of 'economic development' on the appreciation of life (Cantril, 1965:194; Easterlin, 1974; Inglehart, 1977:150). Hardly a line has been written about the possibility that the differences may be due to variations in the realm of 'social relations', 'political conditions' or 'cultural climate'. Nor have the cross-temporal changes in average happiness given rise to much debate; there is some speculation about the minimal changes that have occurred in the US (Campbell et al., 1976:26/28), but little more.

In order to explore the matter somewhat further I took stock of the available data on characteristics of the nations for which comparable happiness data are available. I did so in cooperation with Ton Jonkers. We found various more or less reliable data on economic matters and few on the political functioning of the nations concerned. Unfortunately we could not find comparable data on any cultural characteristics. This is a serious omission: happiness is probably highly dependent on matters such as 'richness of modes of expression', 'cultural anchors for meaning' and 'degree of lust-acceptance'. Though limited, the data are interesting enough. As we will see, there are strong correlations between average happiness and several of the social system characteristics at hand. Most of these correlations are so strong that statistical significance can be demonstrated in spite of the small size of the samples.

Two samples were in fact involved. The earlier mentioned Gallup/Kettering world sample and the EC sample, both from 1975. As noted above the Gallup/Kettering study sampled seven parts of the world. In the context of this search for social system characteristics, nations rather than continents are the relevant entities. Hence I have focused on the nations that were sufficiently represented in these samples.

Presenting the results, I will begin by considering some economic conditions: 'economic prosperity', 'economic growth', 'economic security' and 'economic equality'. (Section 6/1.1). Then I will take a look at the role of some political system variables 'political freedom', 'political democracy' and political unrest'. (Section 6/ 1.2). In this connection I will explore the correspondence between average happiness and conditions of 'peace or war'. (Section 6/ 1.3). It is once more noted that this is a quite occasional selection of variables. Comparable data on social system characteristics of nations at this particular time being quite scarce, I had to make do with the few available.

Not only were differences between citizens of different nations established: inhabitants of various regions within a nation have also been compared, e.g. comparisons between provinces and between rural and urban areas. These findings will be reported in section 6/ 1.4.

6/1.1 ECONOMIC CONDITIONS

As noted above, there is some discussion on whether the 'economic prosperity' of the nation matters for the happiness of its citizens or not. Apart from prosperity as such, 'economic growth' could also play a role. Evaluations

of life could as well be influenced by 'economic security' and 'economic (in)-equality'. Let us see if there is any actual correspondence between the prevalence of these economic conditions and average happiness in the nations at hand.

a. Economic prosperity

Cantril (1965:194) claimed that the differences in happiness between people in different nations are largely a matter of economic development. In his world sample he found a rank order correlation of +.67 ($p < .01$). 'Economic development' was measured by an index covering 'GNP per capita', 'number of doctors', 'density of mass media', 'energy consumption per head' and 'literacy'. (See section N 1.2 in the Databook). Cantril explains the lower happiness of people in the poor countries by a tendency to evaluate their life by means of western standards of consumption. They would thus regard themselves as underdeveloped in terms of their own definition of what a full life could be (p. 257). His findings were questioned by Easterlin (1974). Using the same happiness data, but an other statistical technique, Easterlin showed happiness to be largely unrelated to GNP per head. He explains that outcome by asserting that people evaluate their life by comparison with compatriots. Consistent with this way of reasoning, he demonstrated a strong correlation between individual happiness and relative income position within the US in 1960.

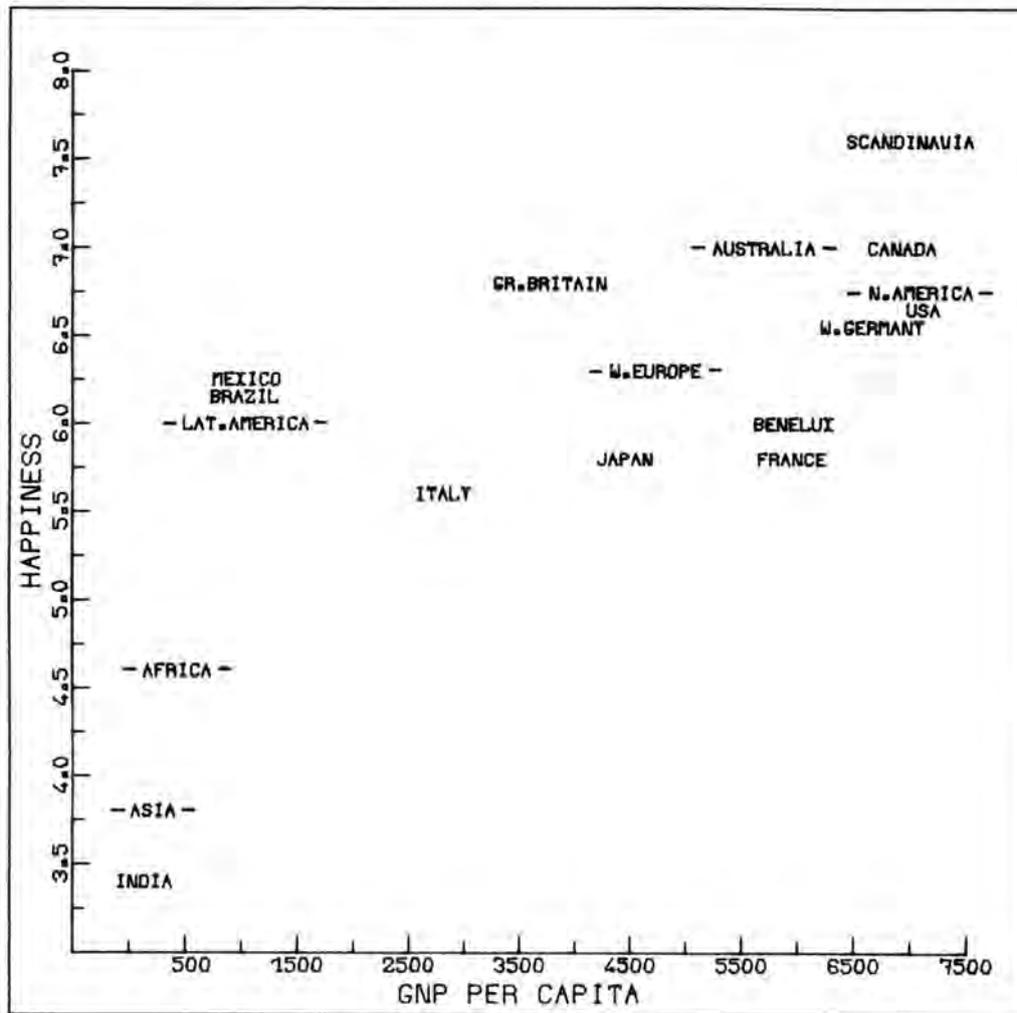
To shed a new light on this matter I made a similar analysis on the basis of the more recent Gallup world sample, in which the poorest regions of the world are better represented. Like Easterlin I used the Gross National Product per head (GNP) to indicate prosperity; the definition of this indicator being more clear-cut than that of Cantril's 'development index'.

Findings. The data are presented in exhibit 6/1.1a. They leave no doubt that people in poor parts of the world are typically less happy than people in affluent ones. (Countries in which GNP per head is less than 500 being regarded as 'poor' and countries where it is higher than \$ 3000 as 'affluent'). In fact a more or less curvilinear relationship appears, the correspondence between average happiness and GNP being more pronounced in the poorest part of the world than in the richest part. The pattern is actually identical with the so-called 'utility functions' of the law of the diminishing returns.

Though less pronounced than in the poorest part of the world, there is

Exhibit 6/1.1a.

Average happiness and GNP per capita in the different parts of the world in 1975.



Data: Happiness data from exhibit 6/1a. GNP data from the World Bank Atlas, 1977.

Correlations: $r = +.74$, $p < .001$ when computed for the separate nations and South of the Sahara Africa ($N = 17$); $r = +.84$, $p < .01$ when the parts of the world and Japan were considered ($N = 7$).

still some correspondence between average happiness and GNP per head among rich countries. This correspondence is not only visible in the data used here, but appears also in the results of the earlier mentioned investigation in

the EC countries in 1975, reported by Inglehart (1977). Curiously enough Inglehart himself saw no relation in the data. He writes that " ... within the industrialized West ... it is virtually impossible to interpret the observed cross-national life-satisfaction levels as a direct reflection of objective welfare" (p. 150). This conclusion is based on a rather odd response of the Irish to one of the happiness questions. Though the Irish did not tend to characterize themselves as 'happy' (only 17 percent 'very happy', as few as in France), they responded very positively to a question about 'satisfaction with life' (almost as positive as the Danes). Ireland being the least affluent nation in the EC, it was an exception in a pattern that otherwise showed a global correlation between average 'life satisfaction' and GNP per capita, while it fitted in reasonably well with the picture that emerged when average responses to the question about 'happiness' were crossed with GNP per head. (Correlations are respectively $+ .15$ ns and $+ .66$ $p < .05$: tables not shown).

The greater correspondence between happiness and GNP in the poorest part of the world seems to be caused by the greater consequences of income differences for subsistence there. In order to check this explanation I took a glance at the correspondence between happiness and the prevalence of life threatening deprivations.

Firstly, I compared the average happiness scores with an estimate of the percentage of the population living in 'absolute poverty'. Data on this matter were found with Kurian (1979:87). They show that extreme poverty exists only in Latin America (± 10 percent), Asia (± 35 percent) and Africa (± 40 percent). As we have seen happiness is typically higher in the regions where no such 'extreme poverty' exists and is also higher in Latin America than in Asia and Africa. The correlation is even higher than in the case of GNP ($r = -.81$, $p < .01$, table not shown).

A similar pattern emerged when I compared average happiness in the nation with data on *sufficiency of food consumption* in calories per day (based on estimates about what is biologically required in the climatic conditions in the various nations). These data were also derived from Kurian (1979:307). Happiness appeared typically lowest in the nations where malnutrition is most frequent ($r = -.64$, $p < .01$, table not shown).

Discussion. It is not impossible that the correlation is spurious, happiness actually depending on factors that run parallel with economic affluence. One such factor could be the greater economic 'security' in affluent nations;

most of these having developed into so-called 'welfare-states'. However, we will see below that there is little correspondence between average happiness in western nations and the level of public welfare expenditure. Political factors may be responsible for a spurious relation as well. The most affluent countries are typically the most free and democratic ones. In section 6/1.2 it will be shown that happiness corresponds equally well with 'freedom' and 'democracy' as with 'economic prosperity'. Cultural differences may be involved as well. Through lack of a broader and more differentiated data-set it is as yet impossible to verify these alternative explanations.

To the extent that it is solid, the correlation between happiness and affluence does not necessarily mean that the latter determines the former. In theory at least one could imagine that the economy flourishes better in countries where most people are happy than in countries where dissatisfaction prevails. As we will see later on, happiness fosters 'health' and 'activity'. (See sections 7/1.1 and 7/1.4). It could also encourage the spirit of enterprise by its effect on 'control beliefs'. (See section 7/2.1). Yet it is clear that these matters play at best a limited role, economic prosperity being largely dependent on infra-structural conditions and trade relations. Consequently happiness does not appear a good predictor of the economic success of a country. As can be seen in exhibit 6/1.3 on p. 171 it was quite low in 1948 in some western nations that were economically very successful in the decades that followed (France, the Netherlands and Western Germany), while one of the most happy nations at that time (the UK) relatively impoverished later on.

Next the effects of affluence on happiness. There is little doubt that prosperity does add to the appreciation of life insofar as it forestalls unbearable discomfort such as hunger and cold. The correlations with 'absolute poverty' and 'sufficiency of food consumption' demonstrate this matter of course. Probably the luxury comforts involved in economic affluence contribute to the appreciation of life as well. Furthermore Cantril (1965:273) may be right in his suggestion that people in relatively poor countries do feel relatively deprived because they compare their own economic situation to Western standards. Apart from these direct effects of affluence, various indirect ones could play a role. Economies that cannot provide people with sufficient food and shelter harm the physical health of a great many. Malnutrition of children, in particular, has serious long-term consequences. Healthcare being typically very limited as well in the poor countries, relatively many people suffer health problems there: if they manage to survive at all. Since happiness depends to some extent on 'health' (to be demonstrated in section 7/1.1) poverty is thus detrimental to it. This effect is illustrated by a

dramatically high correlation between average happiness and 'average life expectancy' in the world sample ($r = +.88$, $p < .001$). Economic affluence also has consequences at the social system level. It tends to foster freedom and 'democracy' (Bertrand, 1981:223; on the basis of an investigation among 115 nations in the 1960's), which in their turn add to the appreciation of life. See section 6/1.2 for more detail. One could also expect affluence to foster happiness by preventing 'political violence' to some extent. Yet Bertrand did not find less violence in affluent countries. Note that 'freedom' and 'democracy' are given another role here than in my earlier remark on the reality value of the correlation between happiness and affluence. In that context they were mentioned as potential spurious variables, but here as intermediating ones. Similarly 'health' can operate both as a source of distortion and as a link in the causal chain between affluence and happiness.

b. Economic growth

If economic 'prosperity' does indeed contribute to happiness, we can also expect a correlation with economic 'growth'. Apart from the effects of affluence as such there is the effect of improvement. The expected correlation does not always turn up, however. Easterlin (1974:109) showed that GNP has doubled in the US between 1946 and 1970, while the average level of happiness remained unchanged during that period. He actually presents that fact as another argument for his claim that happiness is essentially relative. However, there are other nations in which economic growth went together with a raise in happiness.

Findings. As we can see in exhibit 6/1.1b, Brazil, Japan and Western Germany have flourished economically. Happiness has risen considerably in these three countries, while it has hardly risen in the economically less successful ones. It is worth noticing that the growing affluence in Brasil may have involved a reduction of 'extreme poverty', but that in Japan and Western Germany real poverty was already non-existent in 1960. This is another indication that 'luxury' can add to happiness. A further point to note is that the exhibit provides data about economic 'growth' only. As yet there are no data about the relationship between happiness and economic 'decline'.

I have also inspected whether there is any correspondence between 'growth rates' since 1970 and the level of happiness in 1975 in the regions in the Gallup world sample. This appeared to be so; at least in the poorest part

of the world. However, the correlation was not significant ($r = +.14$ ns, table not shown). In the EC it even appeared to be negative ($r = -.19$ ns).

Exhibit 6/1.1b

Changes in happiness and economic growth in five nations between 1960 and 1975

<i>Nation</i>	<i>Growth of GNP In %</i>	<i>Change in average scores ten step happiness scale</i>
Brazil	4.3	+ 1.6
India	1.3	- 0.3
Japan	7.7	+ 0.6
US	2.5	+ 0.1
W. Germany	3.5	+ 1.3

Changes in GNP between 1960 and 1975 drawn from World Bank Atlas (1977).

Changes in happiness established by comparing findings of Cantril (1965:184) with findings of the Kettering/Gallup Survey (Gallup, 1976:465).

Discussion. Though most of these data contradict Easterlin's suggestion that economic growth is typically unrelated to happiness, they provide no conclusive evidence against it. The growing appreciation of life in Brazil, Japan and Western Germany may in fact be due to ameliorations that have little or nothing to do with economic growth: for instance to growing political stability, to improving administration of justice or to the gradual healing of the wounds of war. Such spurious effects can be identified only on the basis of a broader data-set than is available here. Effects of happiness on productivity are again unlikely to be involved. Remember the discussion on affluence as such.

If not spurious or due to effects of happiness, the data would at least partly agree with Easterlin's suggestion; relatively low but still considerable growth rates in India and the US not being paralleled by a rise in average appreciation of life. That would mean that economic growth adds to happiness in some conditions only. One could imagine several such conditions. Growth, for instance, would seem more likely to add to happiness when the surplus is equally distributed, or invested in a collective social security system, rather than where it augments existing income differences, thereby fomenting latent social conflicts. Its effects may also be dependent on the publicity

given to the matter; too enthusiastic a coverage in the mass-media for instance could cause expectations to grow faster than the economy. Obviously the effects of economic growth also depend on the social costs at which it has been bought: in western nations for example pollution, automation and traffic jams, in developing nations the disorganisation of familial networks and conflicts with traditional religious authorities. The data are again too limited to check these possibilities systematically.

c. Economic security

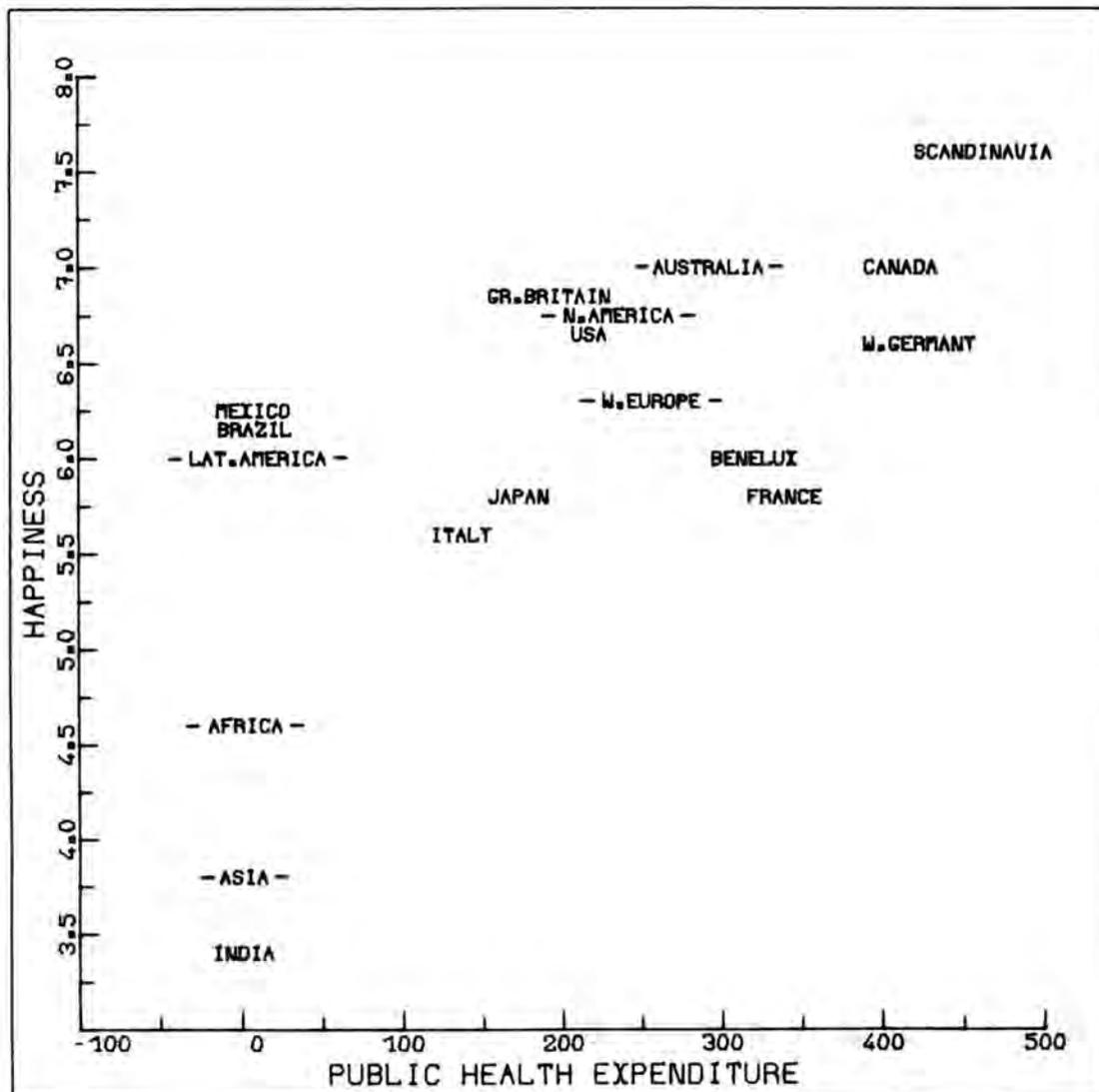
Cantril (1965:262) suggested that happiness depends not only on economic 'prosperity' as such, but also on economic 'security'. He explained the relatively high happiness in Yugoslavia in this way. One could actually imagine that appreciation of life depends more on a guaranteed minimum existence level than on uncertain wealth. 'Security' would seem more basic a need than 'luxury', and people might be reluctant to set too much store by fleeting comforts. If this intuition is correct, we would expect citizens of relatively 'secure' nations to be happier than inhabitants of economically 'insecure' countries, and people in 'not very prosperous but secure' nations to be happier than people in 'rich but insecure' ones. This latter prediction is typically professed in the socialist world; as yet without convincing empirical demonstration.

'Economic security' is in fact a broad phenomenon, on only two aspects of which I found usable indicators. One aspect is *conjunctural security*: the likelihood that great economic calamities will not occur. Some part of that security is reflected in inflation-rates during the past few years. The other aspect is the *social security* provided by some state-guaranteed safety-net in the realm of health care, education, old age pensions, unemployment benefits, etc. The degree of social security in a country is more or less reflected in the percentage of the national income spent on 'public welfare'.

Conjunctural security. Data on inflation between 1970 and 1975 were found with Kurian (1979:89). Contrary to my expectations average happiness appeared essentially unrelated to the rate of inflation during the past five years: both in the world sample and in the EC countries in 1975. The correlations are resp. -.08 and +.10, both insignificant. (Tables not shown). Inflation hitting harder in a failing economy than in a growing one, I also inspected whether happiness was not relatively low among inhabitants of countries

Exhibit 6/1.1c.

Average happiness and public health expenditures in percentage of the GNP in different parts of the world.



Data: Happiness data drawn from exhibit 6/1a. Data on public health expenditures derived from Kurian (1979:90/91).

Correlations: $r = +.69$, $p < .001$ when computed for the separate countries and South of the Sahara Africa ($N = 17$); $r = +.83$, $p < .05$ when the six parts of the world and Japan were considered. ($N = 7$).

where strong inflation occurred coupled with halting growth. No such pattern appeared either. People in Australia and Britain were for instance quite happy in 1975, notwithstanding the fact that inflation has been relatively high in these countries during the past five years and economic growth low. (Table not shown). Still an other noteworthy point is that there existed no correspondence either between happiness levels and unemployment rates' in 1975 among the EC countries. ($r = +.17$ ns, table not shown).

Social security. Data about public welfare expenditures are available for the EC nations (International Labour Office, 1979) but not for the regions in the Gallup world sample. For these last mentioned ones expenditures on 'public health' must do (Drawn from Kurian, 1979:90/91). There is some correspondence between the citizens' average appreciation of life and the percentage of the national income spent on 'public health'. See exhibit 6/1.1c. A similar pattern emerges when public expenditures for 'education' are considered. (Table not shown). In both cases the correlation is far from perfect and among the rich nations it is almost non-existent.

In line with the latter fact no relationship appears either between average happiness and 'global social security expenditures' in the EC countries. The correlation is actually negative. ($r = -.33$ ns). Nor did a positive relation appear when the most prosperous and the economically least successful EC-countries were considered separately. (Tables not shown).

Discussion. It is again possible that spuriousness distorts the picture. The same factors as mentioned in the cases of 'affluence' and 'growth' may be involved. The positive correlation that appears in the poor world is probably largely a spurious effect of affluence. Effects of happiness are once more unlikely to play a role.

Insofar as they are not spurious, the data do not suggest that people are generally happier in a meager but secure economic system than in an affluent but risky one. Happiness is not lower in economically unstable regions than in stable ones and there is not much correspondence either between happiness and social security expenditures. At least no such correspondence exists among the rich nations. (Actually a negative correlation in the EC).

Again these observations are too limited in scope to allow a full survey of the various effects involved. It is not even possible to conclude definitely that economic 'security' matters less for happiness than 'affluence'.

d. Economic equality

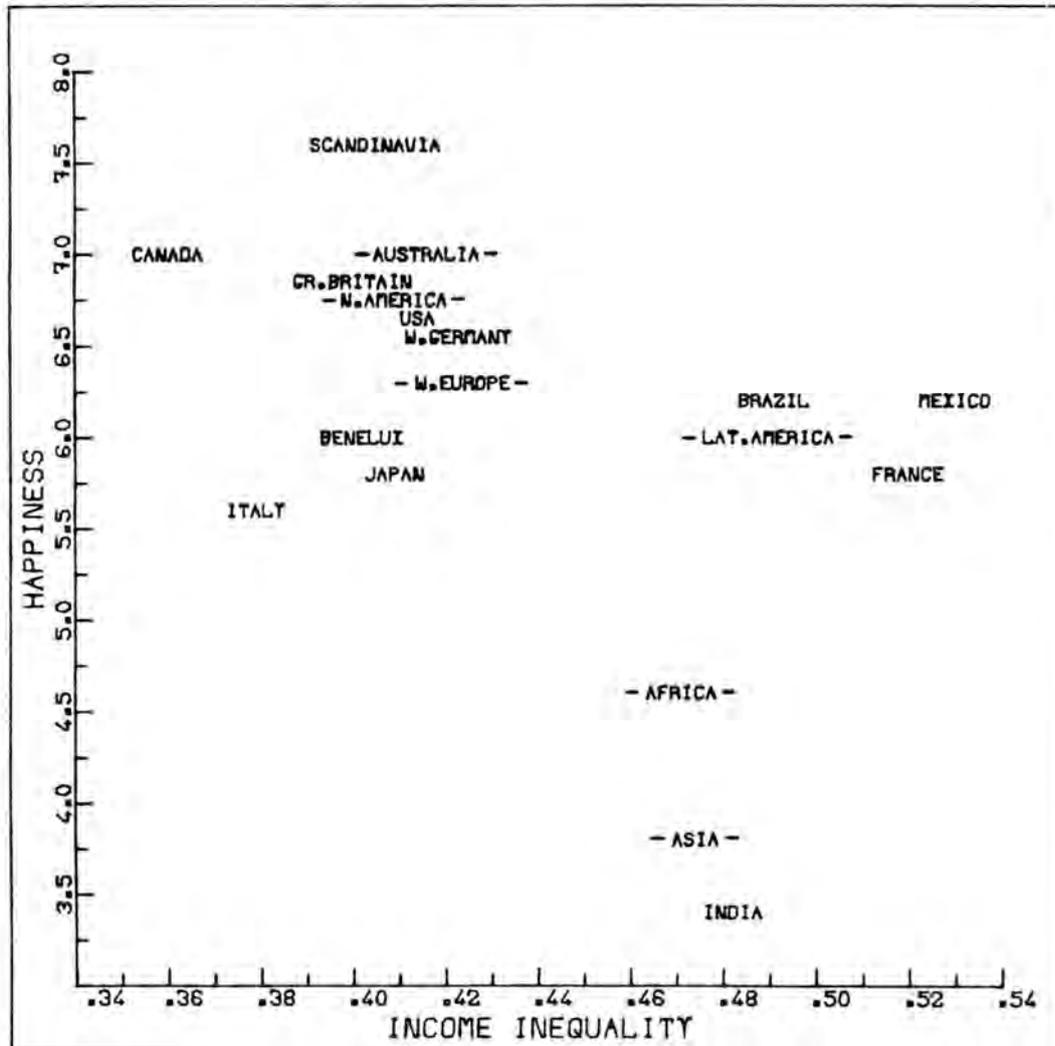
Apart from economic 'prosperity' as such, happiness could also depend on the 'distribution' of wealth. It is currently suggested that economic inequality causes discontent. In fact it is a dictum of several advocates of the socialist economic system that people are generally better off in an economically equal society than in an unequal one, even though equality may be at the cost of some degree of luxury. Yet there are also reasons to expect that the degree of income-inequality in a country might have little effect on the appreciation of life. One reason is that inequality involves both pleasant and unpleasant comparisons which may outbalance each other. Actually the balance effect on average happiness will depend on various conditions, such as the proportion of people considered 'poor' in the population and on the conspicuousness of consumption by the rich. Another thing is that people may tend to work out for themselves whether they are above or below some reference group, rather than making the most of the size of the difference. It is even possible that large income differences are sometimes discounted altogether, people with far higher or far lower incomes being seen as belonging to another world. In fact we will meet with such a phenomenon in section 6/2.3d.

'Economic inequality' is again a multifaceted phenomenon, covering among other things differences in ownership of production means, differences in self-employment and differences in income. Only where difference in income was concerned did I find comparable data for the nations under review. With Cromwell (1977:294/5) and Bertrand (1981:192) I found so-called 'Gini-coefficients' of income inequality. These coefficients are not all based on data from one and the same period: The Gini-coefficient for Italy, for instance is based on data from 1948, while most other data concern the 1960's. The Gini-coefficient is based on the so-called Lorenz-curve. It reflects the extent to which the actual situation approaches a situation of total income equality, to the extent to which the relation between the proportion of the income-receiving population studied and the proportion of the total income received is linear. Cromwell adjusted the Gini-coefficients for a number of variables found to be statistically correlated with inequalities, viz. per capita income, economic system, and the development of natural resources (Cromwell, 1977:308). Though these data provide at best a limited scope, it is nevertheless interesting to find out whether they correspond with average happiness in 1975 in the nations at hand.

Findings. As can be seen in exhibit 6/1.1d there is indeed some correlation.

Exhibit 6/1.1d.

Happiness in 1979 and income inequality in measured Gini-coefficients in preceding years in various parts of the world.



Data : Happiness data from exhibit 6/1a. Adjusted Gini-coefficients drawn from Cromwell (1977:294/5) and Bertrand (1981:192).

Correlations: $r = -.45$ $p < .05$ when computed for the separate countries and South Sahara Africa (N=15) and $r = -.66$ ns when Japan and the six parts of the world are considered (N=7).

Correlations are respectively $-.45$ in the world sample and $-.28$ in the EC sample. The former is significant at the $.05$ level, the latter is not.

Discussion. It is again possible that the correlations are in fact spurious; the differences in happiness being due to paralleling differences in for instance 'political freedom' rather than to income equality as such. This is particularly likely in the case of the poor countries. As far as rich nations are concerned, the data do not suggest that great positive effects of income equality have been veiled by negative effects of lower freedom.

Once more the results are unlikely to reflect effects of the happiness of citizens on the income distribution in the country. Though happy people may be somewhat more concerned about their fellowmen in some respects (see sections 7/1.3a and 7/5.1), it seems rather far fetched to assume that this will materialize in appreciable differences in political decisions on the matter. As will appear in section 7/5.3a happy people were moreover rather conservative in their political views in western nations in the post-war decades. As such they are not particularly likely to have pressed for a leveling down of income differences.

Insofar as they are not spurious, the correlations must be attributed to effects of income-equality; prevalence of great income differences in a country being slightly detrimental to the average appreciation of life. It is noted that this effect may have been more pronounced in the rich nations before 1975. As we will see in section 6/2.4 there are indications that happiness became less dependent on relative income-position in some of these nations in the post-war decades.

6/1.2 POLITICAL CONDITIONS

Common sense would suggest that it is better to live in freedom in a politically stable country than to be subject to suppression and political turmoil. There are indeed strong indications that things work that way, but no conclusive evidence.

a. Freedom

Political freedom is often praised as increasing people's chances of enjoying life. Utilitarian philosophers in particular have stressed that allowing the greatest possible freedom ('possible' without curtailing anyone else's freedom) opens the way to the greatest happiness of the largest number of people. Though this claim instigated heated theoretical discussions, nobody

has ever explored its empirical tenability. Considering the possibilities of doing so, I once more encountered the problem that the concept in fact covers a broad range of phenomena. Bay (1965: 183/201) for example distinguishes three freedom variants: freedom from coercion by others (social freedom), freedom from compulsive tendencies in oneself (psychological freedom), and freedom from informational manipulation (potential freedom). Of these three variants only the first and the last are of interest in this discussion on social system characteristics. I found data on both: firstly data on cross-national differences in *governmental coercion* in the postwar decades, which can be deemed indicative of 'social freedom' and secondly data on *freedom of the press* which is a prerequisite for 'potential freedom'.

Coercion by government. Feierabend & Feierabend (1971:160) rated the degree of government coercion in a great many countries between 1940 and 1970 on the basis of the following three criteria:

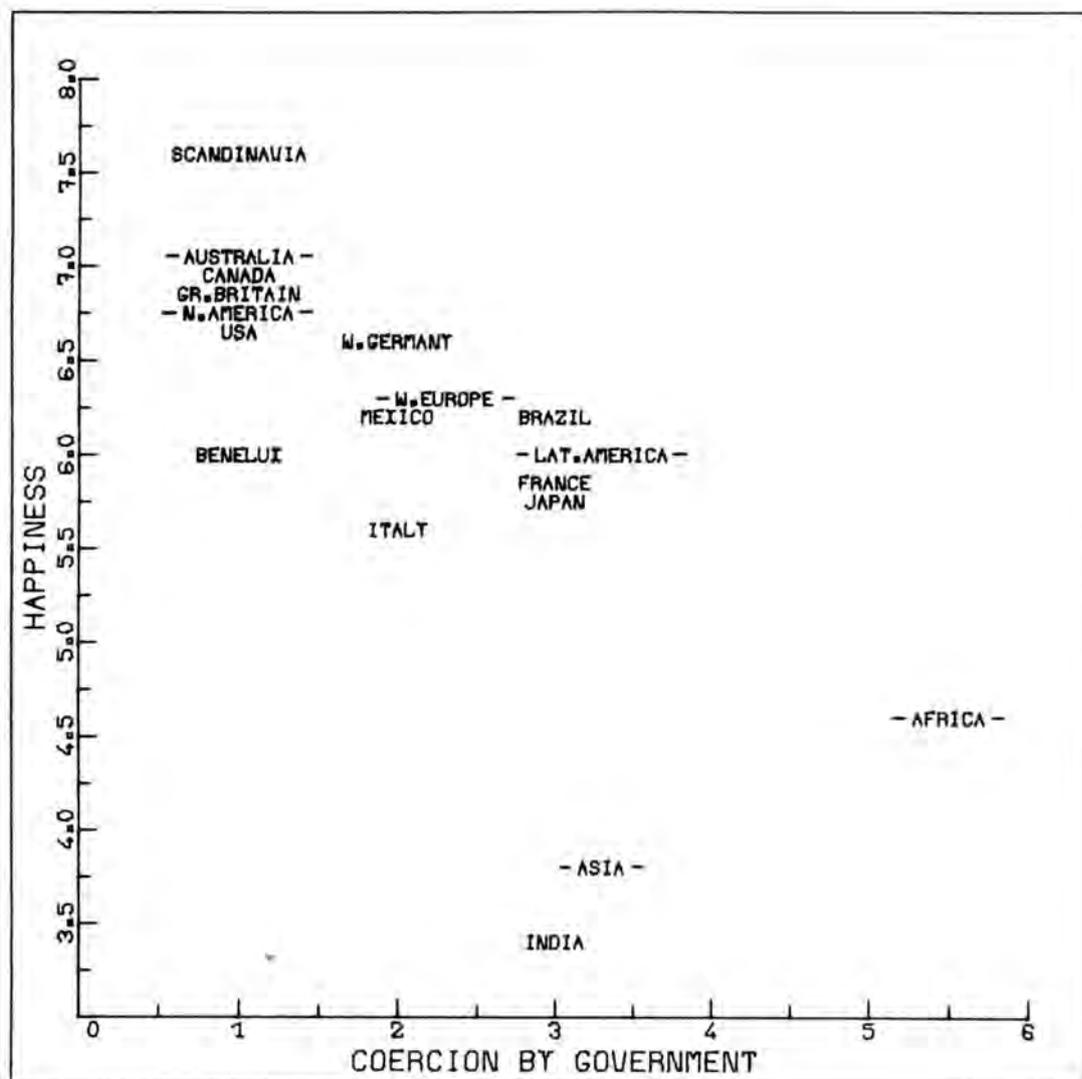
1. the extent to which civil rights are violated.
2. the extent to which political opposition is oppressed;
3. how undemocratic the policy is.

Bertrand (1981:195) rated some more countries on the basis of these same criteria. The ratings of the countries concerned here are presented in exhibit 6/1.2a, together with the average happiness scores. The exhibit leaves no doubt that people were generally happier in nations where human rights were most recognized and respected and where democratic opposition was allowed and functioning. It is noted that this variable differentiates among the poor as well as among the rich nations. In the EC sample a correlation of $-.65$ ($p < .05$) appeared. Unfortunately we have no data about average happiness in the Communist countries. These countries appear as the most oppressive ones in Feirabend's list.

Freedom of press. Furthermore I found data on differences in the freedom of the press in the early 1970's. (Kurian, 1979:362). The 'press freedom index' was created by the University of Missouri School of Journalism in order to measure the freedom of a country's media to criticize their own local and national governments. Two native and two foreign judges were asked to rate each country on the prevalence of such things as 'legal controls', 'favouritism in the release of government news' and 'censorship'. Twenty-three such items were involved; all rated on fixed rating scales. If there was disagreement between the native and foreign judges by more than 6 percent, judgments of

Exhibit 6/1.2a

Average happiness in 1975 and governmental coercion in the years between 1948 and 1970.



Data: Happiness data from exhibit 6/1a. Data on governmental permissiveness/ coerciveness drawn from Feierabend & Feierabend (1972:160) and Bertrand (1981:195).

Correlations: $r = -.67$, $p < .005$ when computed for the separate nations and south of the Sahara Africa ($n = 17$); $r = -.76$, $p < .05$ when the six parts of the world and Japan are considered. ($N = 7$).

foreigners were used. The index represents the average of the scores. It ranges from -4.00 to + 4.00, the latter value depicting the highest degree of press-freedom. As in the case of governmental coercion there is a strong statistical relation with average happiness of citizens; $r = + .65$, ($p < .005$). Again this correspondence exists not only in the poor parts of the world, but also among the rich countries. In the EC sample the correlation was $+ .63$ ($p < .05$). (Table not shown).

Discussion. The data match the belief that political freedom fosters happiness in the long run. However, they do not allow a definite conclusion, because it is not yet established that the correlation is not spurious. The freedom-respecting nations being typically the most affluent ones, the statistical correspondence may be due to differences in economic prosperity. This is at least so in as far as the poor half of the world is concerned; the correlation in the affluent part can hardly be due to differences in wealth, the correlation between happiness and GNP being very small there. Yet again it may be that some cultural variables, as yet unidentified, are actually responsible for the differences in happiness. 'Tolerance' and adherence to 'universalist' values could for instance add to a positive appreciation of life and could at the same time create a climate that promotes individual freedom.

In principle the correlation could also be due to effects of happiness. Prevalence of discontent in a society could create so many tensions that people become characteristically less willing to respect each other's rights, so that curtailing individual freedom becomes necessary to avoid social chaos. Yet this hypothesis seems again rather far-fetched. Not only is the degree of freedom in countries obviously more dependent on lasting elements in the political culture and on balances of power, but we will also see that unhappy people are not the most likely to engage in political action. (To be discussed in section 6/1.2c). Prevalence of unhappiness in a society seems to provide at best a willing public for protest movements.

Insofar as they are not spurious, the correlations must hence be interpreted as meaning that political freedom tends to add to the appreciation of life in contemporary societies. It could do so in various ways: directly by sparing people the frustrations of suppression and indirectly by creating a developmental climate which fosters the development of characteristics that predispose to happiness. Freedom can for instance be conducive to 'self-respect', 'mental effectiveness' and 'control beliefs'; characteristics which we will see to be promotive to happiness. (See respectively 7/6.1b, 7/1.2 and 7/2.1). It is worth remembering that great freedom sometimes can have

negative consequences for happiness as well. It can, for example, be felt as an uncomfortable responsibility for some people in great need of guidance and it can be a serious handicap in bridling social disorders, which seem mostly detrimental to average happiness. (To be demonstrated in section 6/1.2c).

b. Democracy

'Democracy' and 'freedom' are related phenomena, though not identical ones. Like most political systems, democracy is praised as the surest way of procuring the greatest happiness of the greatest number of people; one of the most current arguments being that nobody knows better what people need than the people themselves. Again the discussion has been theoretical rather than empirical.

When searching for comparable indicators of the degree of democracy in the nations of which I know happiness averages, I came upon the earlier mentioned study by Bertrand (1981), which deals in fact with the same question. Bertrand gathered data on a great many aspects of democratic functioning of various nations. On the basis of a factor analysis he extracted two variables from this pool: the degree to which things work according to the model of the *liberal democracy* and the degree to which an *interest democracy* functions. Bertrand related these scores to an estimate of the 'well-being' in the nations concerned, which he assessed by means of an index covering matters such as 'health', 'education', 'social security', 'income equality', 'freedom', 'justice' and 'protection against violence' (p. 139). He found a strong positive correlation, though one that appeared to be dependent on economic prosperity. Because his indicator of 'well-being' is so hybrid, it is hard to interpret the result. Hence it is the more interesting to relate Bertrand's democracy scores to the happiness averages at hand here.

Liberal democracy. Bertrand established the degree to which the political reality in the various countries matched the ideal of a parliamentary democracy on the basis of the following fifteen indicators (p. 162). All concerned the period between 1960 and 1965.

1. the constitutional status of the regime;
2. separation between legislative and executive powers;
3. freedom of press;
4. freedom of opposition;

5. free elections;
6. representativeness of the regime;
7. absence of bans on any political party;
8. existence of a multi party system;
9. actual interest articulation by political parties;
10. actual interest integration in the parliament;
11. legislative influence of the parliament;
12. dominance of the political leader in the country;
13. relative dominance of the biggest party;
14. possibilities of opposition and coalitions;
15. absence of restrictions for minority groups.

There is a distinct correspondence between these scores and the average happiness in the nations at hand. Inhabitants of nations that score well on this index were typically more satisfied with their life than people in countries that hardly score. This pattern is least pronounced in the Gallup World sample; the correlation coefficient being only $+ .47$ $p < .05$. India is the exception here. Though reasonably democratic, average happiness was very low there. In the EC sample a greater correlation appears: $r = + .67$, $p < .05$. (Tables not shown).

Interest democracy. Bertrand also assessed the degree to which the political system leaves room for non-parliamentary articulation of interest: in particular the extent to which associational groups can exert influence as compared with institutional ones such as government bureaucracies, churches and the army. He did so on the basis of the following four indicators (p. 162).

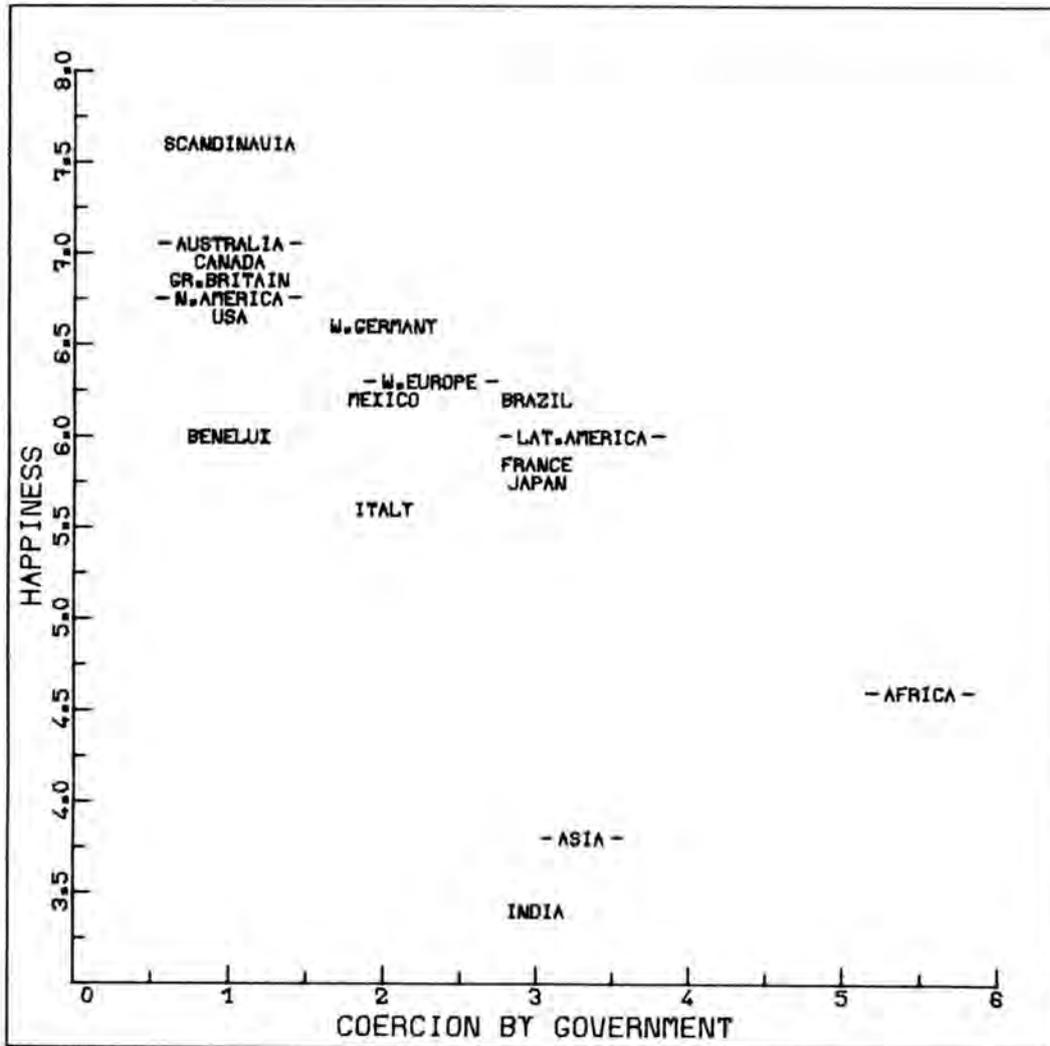
1. influence of 'organized' interest groups;
2. limitedness of the role of 'institutional interest groups';
3. limitedness of the role of 'ascriptive interest groups';
4. limitedness of the role of 'irregular interest groups'.

The correspondence with average happiness is even more pronounced in this case, at least in the Gallup World sample. See exhibit 6/1.2a. In the EC sample it is somewhat smaller ($r = + .56$ ns, table not shown).

Discussion. As in the case of 'freedom' these correlations can be spurious. In the poorer countries, differences in affluence are likely to distort the picture, but where the EC is concerned economic development can hardly be held

Exhibit 6/1.2a

Average happiness in 1975 and the degree of 'interest democracy' in various parts of the world between 1960 and 1965.



Data on happiness from exhibit 6/1a. Data on democratic functioning drawn from Bertrand (1981:168/171).

Correlations: $r = +.80$, $p < .001$ when computed for the separate nations and south of the Sahara Africa ($N = 17$). $r = +.90$, $p < .01$ when the six parts of the world and Japan were concerned ($N = 7$).

responsible. Again it is not very likely that the correlations reflect effects of the personal happiness of citizens on the level of democracy in the country.

To the extent that they are not spurious, the correlations can be interpreted as signifying that democracy usually adds to the appreciation of life. It could do so in many ways. It could ensure that political decisions answer better to current desires and it could tend to result in a softening of painful social differences. Later in this chapter we will see that differences in income and social rank do affect happiness; though not always equally much. See respectively sections 6/2.3 and 6/2.7. Democracy can also add to happiness by its effects on personal development. Like freedom it could also bolster 'control beliefs' and 'self respect', which in their turn are conducive to happiness (To be shown in sections 7/2.1 and 7/6.1b). However, all these effects are obviously rather conditional. Democracy can also result in loss of control, manipulation and legitimation of repression; much depending on the political culture, the size of majorities and the nature of the political challenges. It is noteworthy in this context that liberal democracy tends to foster political violence if not accompanied by interest democracy. Bertrand's (1981:222) findings suggest that democratic rights rouse frustration if no organizational channels for interest articulation are available. In fact he found a positive correlation between violence and liberal democracy and a negative one with interest democracy. Possibly this is one of the reasons why interest democracy is more closely related to happiness. These possibilities considered, there is little doubt that democracy can sometimes be detrimental to happiness as well. Yet its pros seem to counterbalance its cons in the contemporary world.

c. **Political unrest**

Apart from a few revolutionary romantics, most people tend to see political unrest as a menace to happiness. It is difficult to check this belief empirically, 'political unrest' again being a multi-faceted phenomenon, variations of which are hard to establish.

I found three indicators of political unrest, two in Hibb's (1973) cross-national study on 'political violence' and one in the earlier mentioned 'Book of World Rankings' by Kurian (1979:57).

Political violence in the past decades. The first indicator of political unrest developed by Hibbs was labeled 'internal war'. It reflects the incidence of insurgent armed attacks, actual and attempted assassinations of political leaders and the number of people being killed in anti-state or intergroup conflict situations (p. 11). His data cover the period from 1958 to 1967. Though the happiness data at hand here have been gathered a decade later, it is nevertheless useful to inspect the relationship. Levels of turmoil are not too variable through time, nor are levels of happiness. Long term consequences may moreover be involved.

There is indeed a strong relationship. As shown in exhibit 6/1.2b (see next page) people were generally happiest in countries which experienced the least political violence over the past decades. The pattern is somewhat less pronounced in the western world. The US is an exception. In spite of a high level of violence, people are still relatively happy in this country. This fact could substantiate the earlier noted suspicion that happiness scores in the US are inflated by a tendency to 'keep smiling', but it can also mean that the pronounced affluence, freedom and democracy in that nation more than out-weighed the violence. In the EC sample the correlation is somewhat lower ($r = -.53$ ns; table not shown).

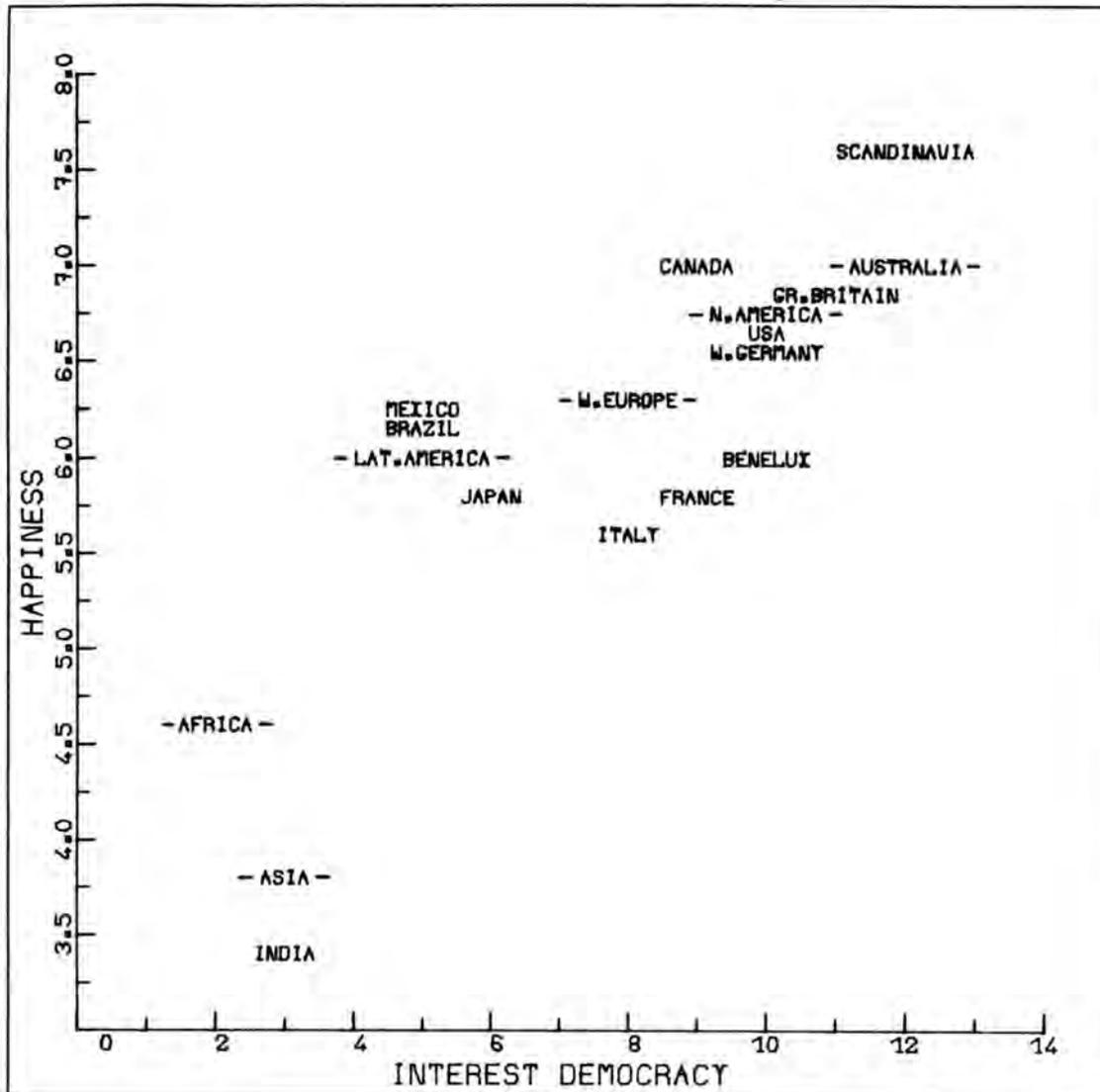
Political protest in past decades. A similar though less pronounced pattern appears when happiness averages are compared with Hibb's index of 'Collective protest', based on incidence of riots, anti-government demonstrations and political strikes. In the world sample the correlation is $-.53$, $p < .01$. Among the rich nations the pattern is largely identical. In the EC sample $r = -.62$, $p < .05$. (Tables not shown).

Current civic disorders. Likewise there was some correspondence between average happiness in 1975 and political disorders at that time. Current disorder was measured by Kurian's (1979:57) 'Civic disorder index'. This index was based on the incidence of

1. political assassinations;
2. general strikes;
3. guerrilla incidents;
4. government crises;
5. purges;
6. riots;
7. revolutions;
8. anti-government demonstrations.

Exhibit 6/1.2b.

Average happiness in 1975 and degree of 'internal war' in the past decades in the various parts of the world.



Data on happiness from exhibit 6/1a. Data in 'internal war' from Hibbs (1973: table 5.2).

Correlations: $r = -.71$, $p < .001$ when computed for the separate nations and south of the Sahara Africa ($n = 17$); $r = -.63$ ns when the six parts of the world and Japan were considered. ($N = 7$).

Kurian's data are based on the period between 1975 and 1978. Their correlation with average happiness in the world sample in 1975 is modest ($r = -.44$ ns). In the EC sample it is higher ($r = +.79$, $p < .01$). (Tables not shown).

Discussion. Thus far the data suggest that political unrest is detrimental to happiness. Once more we must be aware of the possibility that the correlations are spurious. The lower happiness in turbulent countries could for instance be a matter of economic development. However, the poor countries reviewed here are not typically the most troubled ones; neither in the world sample, nor in the EC. Bertrand (1981:233) did not find more political violence in poor countries either. Nor did he find any clear-cut relation between violence and democracy. That latter variable can thus not be held responsible either.

If not spurious, it is possible that the correlations mean that dissatisfaction with life in a great part of the population instigates political unrest. This time such an effect seems more plausible at first sight. The phenomenon at hand here is typically more dependent on public mood than the social system characteristics discussed so far. Several authors have in fact suggested that unhappiness may rouse political protest, among others Barnes & Kaase (1979: 381). Obviously much depends on the perceived source of unhappiness. Currently people in the western world tend to attribute their unhappiness to their own character shortcomings and relations with intimates, rather than to political factors (Wessman, 1956:217 on the basis of US data and Iisager 1948:239 on the basis of an investigation among Danish students). Hence they are unlikely to seek improvement through political action. Furthermore, unhappy people are characteristically not endowed with the qualities needed to get things moving. As we will see later on they are less likely to join voluntary organizations (section 6/3.2), less successful at mixing with other people (section 7/ 1.3a), less active (section 7/ 1.4) and less inclined to believe that their efforts might be worthwhile (section 7/2.1).

Effects of political unrest on the happiness of the average citizen are also likely to be conditional. Much depends for instance on the level of frustration tolerance in the population. Once more positive effects can occur as well. Political unrest is a corrective phenomenon that can add to happiness in the long run, in spite of temporary discomfort. Statistically these opposed effects could largely neutralize each other. Possibly a broader and better controlled data-set would show some curvilinear relationship: happiness being highest at the medium levels of political unrest.

6/1.3 PEACE AND WAR

Common sense tells us that war is a disaster and hence detrimental to the happiness of most citizens in afflicted countries. There is strong evidence that this is true.

Sequel of World War II. Four years after World War II, Buchanan and Cantril (1953) inquired about life-satisfaction in several of the countries that had been involved. The responses are presented in exhibit 6/1.3. They demonstrate that happiness was at that time lowest in the nations that suffered most, lowest of all in Western Germany, Italy and France; somewhat higher in the Netherlands and Great Britain and highest in the US and Australia. The differences correspond not only with the proximity to the war scene, but specify winners and losers as well. Only Norway is an exception to this pattern.

The exhibit also reports findings of a comparable investigation fifteen years later. With the exception of Italy, the appreciation of life appears to have risen in all countries. Though less pronounced, the earlier differences are still visible. In chapter 8 we will meet with further indications of long term detrimental effects of warfare on happiness. It will appear that teenagers who had been close to the war scene were in 1948 still considerably less cheerful than kids raised in peaceful regions (section 8/1.1c) and that the horrors of the German concentration camps manifest themselves even decades afterwards in the relatively low happiness of the survivors (section 8/1.2c).

Threat of war. The mere threat of war seems to afflict the appreciation of life as well. Cantril (1965:90/92) demonstrated a slight drop in two successive investigations in India in October 1962, shortly before and after the outbreak of skirmishes at the Chinese border. In the US Bradburn & Caplovitz (1965: 122/126) assessed the effects of the Cuba Missile Crisis in October 1963. Contrary to Cantril, they did not observe a drop in overall happiness, nor in hedonic level.

Discussion. The latter longitudinal observations are more reliable than the earlier synchronic ones. It is possible that people in Germany, Italy and France were already relatively less happy before the outbreak of World War II. Admitting that such effects may be involved, it still leaves little doubt that the war caused much unhappiness, particularly to people in the defeated nations.

Exhibit 6/1.3**Happiness in some western nations, respectively four and thirty years after World War II.**

	1948-1949 (1)				1975 (2)			
	<i>'How satisfied are you with the way you are getting on now?'</i>				<i>'Taking all things together, how would you say things are these days?'</i>			
	<i>very satisfied</i>	<i>all right</i>	<i>dis-satisfied</i>	<i>don't know/ no answer</i>	<i>very happy</i>	<i>pretty happy</i>	<i>not too happy</i>	<i>don't know/ no answer</i>
Australia	22	57	20	1	37	57	6	0
France	2	27	56	15	16	55	27	2
Italy	5	45	46	4	6	48	44	2
The Netherlands	8	54	34	4	31	54	10	5
Norway	21	67	10	2	—	—	—	—
UK	12	52	33	3	33	50	27	1
US	15	57	26	2	24	67	9	0
W.Germany	2	51	44	3	11	63	21	5

(1) Data from Buchanan & Cantril (1953) (2) Data on EC countries from European Commission (1975). Data on Australia and the US from Gallup/Kettering summary report Q9.

The horrors, the losses and the humiliations are unlikely to have balanced the thrills. Moreover, various indirect harms were involved. The war left most countries in poverty and thereby drained one of the sources of happiness. Remember section 6/1.1a on the relation between happiness and 'affluence'. Further, death, dislocation and disorganization tore many families apart; section 6/4 will show that 'family ties' are essential to happiness in the modern world. Warfare was also detrimental to the development of various personal characteristics that usually add to happiness: it undermined the 'physical health' of a great many and caused much 'mental impairment'. To many of the conquered it also brought a severe loss of 'self-respect'. (The relation to happiness of these variables will be discussed in respectively the sections 7/1.1, 7/1.2 and 7/6.1).

The follow-up study in India in 1972 leaves no doubt that the mere threat of war can be detrimental. Spuriousness is not likely to be involved here. Neither is it likely that a sudden drop in happiness made the Indians fly at the Chinese. At best some response bias may be involved; the spirit of war may have involved pressures not to present oneself as too happy. Yet it is by no means sure that such a distortion was involved.

6/1.4 SOME REGIONAL DIFFERENCES IN HAPPINESS

Apart from differences between nations there are differences between places within nations: differences between provinces and differences between urban and rural areas. Such regional differences could also correspond with variations in happiness. In some cases this appeared indeed to be the case.

a. Districts (N 1.4)

An investigation in Yugoslavia in 1960 measured differences in happiness between Slovenians, Serbians and Croats. The former were the most happy and the last mentioned the least. In 1973 a study in the nine EC countries distinguished between districts as well. Average happiness scores for fifty-five districts were computed. Considerable differences within countries appeared to exist. Yet these differences were generally smaller than the differences between countries. Satisfaction with life was highest among inhabitants of Drenthe in the Netherlands and lowest in South Italy. This study was repeated

in 1975. An essentially similar ranking appeared (Inglehart, 1977: 160/1).

These findings allow a similar analysis to that discussed above. As yet no one has tried to. I won't either in this book.

b. Rural vs. urban areas (L 4.2)

It is often suggested that urban living fosters unhappiness. Social networks in cities are considered to be both too loose and too complex, thus giving rise to loneliness and alienation. Furthermore, city life is claimed to be too stressful because of hurriedness, merciless competition, sensory overload and overcrowding. Urban society is also said to make people more envious, the differences between rich and poor being more palpable. These effects are generally believed to be most pronounced in periods of rapid urbanization, migrants from rural areas being ill-equipped against the hazards of modern city life and still remembering the blessings of a more natural way of living in the country. See Fischer:1973:221) for more detail about this so-called 'urban malaise' theory.

Findings. Fourteen investigations in twelve nations inspected whether there are differences in the happiness of people living in rural and urban areas. These findings are presented in part III of the Databook, section L 4.2. Several of these investigators did find differences, though not all equally strong ones. Strong differences were found in Brazil, the Dominican Republic and Panama. Urban dwellers appeared happier in these countries. Less pronounced differences of the same kind were found in other developing countries as well: e.g. in Cuba, India, the Philippines and Yugoslavia. In Finland town dwellers appeared to be only slightly happier than countrymen. No differences were found in Nigeria, Western Germany and the US. All investigations on this matter used indicators of overall happiness.

Fischer (1973:233) observed that the difference varies with 'economic development'. It tends to be small or non-existent in both the poorest and the most prosperous countries, whereas it is greatest in the countries in-between. Fisher also considered the effect of 'education'. This variable appeared to explain part of the greater happiness of townspeople in developing nations. Yet significant differences remained in most of these. (p. 224).

Several American investigations suggested that elderly people are happier in rural areas than in towns (Hynson, 1975:66; Wilkening & McGranahan,

1978:220). Yet the differences disappear when controlled for 'health', 'marital status', 'ethnicity', 'income' and 'church-attendance' (Sauer et al., 1976:273).

Discussion. The findings must be a surprise to the adherents to the 'urban malaise' theory. The data show the reverse. Instead of being less happy, city dwellers mostly appear more happy; especially in the most rapidly developing nations. Does this mean that the urban malaise theory is simply wrong? Not entirely. Part of the differences is due to the fact that privileged people in these countries tend to live in towns. In some degree this effect was demonstrated by the control for 'education' level.

It is not improbable either that effects of happiness are involved. In the poor nations happy people could be somewhat more apt to move from the country into town. Western studies shown that the happy tend to be more 'healthy' (7/ 1.1), 'active' (7/ 1.3) and more inclined to take their fate in their own hands (7/ 2.1). Cities having grown enormously in the poor parts of the world in the period at hand, the possibility of selectiveness is not insignificant. In western nations selective migration is not likely to be involved.

Yet there is little doubt that at least a part of the difference is due to a tendency of urban life to be more rewarding than life in the country. This does not mean that the hazards of cities, stressed by the urban malaise theory, do not exist. However, these problems are not equally urgent in all towns. They are not even quite identical. The problems of South American shanty towns are obviously different from those of the big metropolitan centers in the US or the old cities in Europe. Moreover there are the drawbacks of rural living, especially the disadvantages that are so apparent in many developing nations; the lack of economic prospect, the rigid social control in the face of a dwindling legitimacy on the part of the authorities, the crumbling of traditions and rituals, the resulting lack of stimulation, etc. Where 'affluence' and 'freedom' are concerned these drawbacks are the same as those that appeared detrimental to happiness at the national level (6/ 1.1a, resp. 6/1.2a). Apparently these characteristics work in the same way at the local level. The data suggest that those disadvantages of rural life more than counterbalance the equally real hazards of living in a boom town.

c. Size of town (L 4.1)

Current ideas about the 'inhabitability of big towns' parallel the above mentioned folklore about differences between urban and rural living. Inhabitants of big towns are believed to be less happy than people living in small towns; poor city dwellers in particular. The idea that city life is detrimental to the joy in living is firmly rooted. Even city dwellers themselves believe that. Several investigations in western nations have shown that they are more dissatisfied with their living environment than inhabitants of small towns and that they often express the wish to live in a smaller town (Fischer, 1973: 222). Yet inhabitants of big cities are actually not less happy. Only the large metropolitan areas in the US will appear as an exception.

Findings. Nineteen investigations considered the differences in happiness between people living in big cities and in small towns; nine of these concern the US. The differences these investigations found were less pronounced than the ones between rural and urban areas. In Brazil, Poland and Cuba, people living in big cities turned out to be somewhat happier than people in small towns. No differences were observed in India, Western Europe and Nigeria. In the US, inhabitants of large metropolitan areas appeared slightly less happy than average; especially people living in the centers.

The relationship was mostly not wholly linear. People living in medium sized cities turned out to be somewhat more happy than the inhabitants of either the very small or the very big ones. The actual size of this 'medium' format varied from nation to nation.

The lower happiness level of people in big metropolitan areas in the US was largely accounted for by people who migrated from small towns to a big city. These people appeared to be relatively poor, while the ones who left the cities were relatively well-off (Fischer, 1973:231). Differences in income were linked to happiness in the US at the time of these investigations.

Though an influx of poor people may depress average happiness in US metropolitan centers, the poor do not appear particularly vulnerable to the hazards of city life. Poor Americans living in the big cities rather took more pleasure in life than their fellows in misfortune in small towns, while well-to-do inhabitants of big cities appeared slightly less happy than compatriots of equal income living in smaller towns. A similar difference was observed in France.

In the US a time-trend can be observed: between 1946 and 1966 the relationship

became clearly negative among Blacks, whereas among Whites it remained absent.

These investigations have almost all used indicators of 'overall happiness'. A French study found size of town essentially unrelated to 'hedonic level'.

Discussion. The differences in Brazil and Cuba are probably akin to the rural-urban difference in developing countries discussed above. As in the case of rural-urban differences, there is little support for the belief that city life fosters discontent. Again there is more evidence for the reverse. Only where the large metropolitan areas in the US were concerned did the data meet the prediction at first sight. However, at a closer look the lower happiness in these places seemed largely a matter of selective migration, except for the growing dissatisfaction of urban Blacks, which will be discussed separately in section 6/2.3d. It is worth noting that the data do not support the belief that poor people are particularly vulnerable to the hazards of city life either.

d. Local economic prosperity (L 4.4)

In the US average happiness has been compared between four communities which varied in 'economic prosperity'. People in depressed communities were found to be slightly less happy than in the prosperous ones; especially elderly people and people at the lower end of the social ladder. When the most prosperous city was compared with a less prosperous but improving one, inhabitants of the latter appeared slightly (but not significantly) happier. Again the differences were strongest in the lowest social status categories. The differences appeared both in the responses to questions about 'overall happiness' and questions about 'hedonic level'.

These differences are probably largely due to differences in 'income' and 'employment'. The next paragraph will show that happiness was related to these factors in the US at the time of this investigation. (See respectively sections 6/2.1a and 6/3.1a). It is not impossible that socio-cultural factors such as those described by Jahoda et al. (1933) are involved as well. Economic depression may have impaired several other sources of happiness as well, such as 'corporate life' (see section 6/3.2), 'family life' (see section 6/4) and the more general outlook on life (see section 7/6). Once again selective migration may play a role. Bias or spuriousness are less likely to be involved. Evident distortions of that kind come at least not to mind.

6/2 HAPPINESS AND ONE'S PLACE IN SOCIETY

Obviously living conditions are not identical for all members of society. Not only are there differences between individuals, but also between social categories. In most societies life for a man is different from life for a woman and in many there are differences in living conditions between social classes and ethnic categories. The differences concern a great variety of conditions: 'economic prosperity', 'social power', 'access to art and knowledge', 'ways of interacting with others', etc. Several investigators inspected whether such categorical differences in living conditions correspond with differences in the appreciation of life.

Firstly, happiness has been compared across several dimensions of '*ascribed*' status. Comparisons were made between 'males' and 'females' (see section 6/2.1), between 'young' and 'old' (section 6/2.2) and between 'minorities' and the 'majority' in society (section 6/2.3). Secondly, happiness has been related to several dimensions of more or less 'achieved' status: namely to 'income' (section 6/2.4), to 'education' (section 6/2.5) and to 'occupational status' (section 6/2.6). Several investigators moreover considered the relationship between happiness and 'global social rank' (section 6/2.7). We will see that happiness was found to be related to several of these factors.

It will also appear that the relationship between happiness and social status variables is highly variable through time and culture. Presently the correlations are most pronounced in the developing nations. In contemporary western nations they are typically modest. Both in the EC and the US in the 1970's, social status variables explained together only 10 percent of the variance in happiness (respectively Inglehart, 1977:441; Andrews & Withey, 1976:139). This variance in happiness *within* western nations seems considerably smaller than the variance *between* them (Inglehart, 1977:442). Yet it is difficult to say for sure. The difference may to some extent be due to the fact that the latter variance is based on aggregated data, but the former not. In section 5/3a I have already referred to Robinson's (1950) warning that correlations based on aggregated data tend to be stronger.

6/2.1 GENDER (G 1.1)

It has often been observed that males occupy a privileged position in most societies, modern western society included. Currently the disadvantaged posi-

tion of women is a political issue. The debate has led to the instigation of many attempts to demonstrate the suffering of women empirically. Studies on physical and mental health did indeed show there to be a greater incidence of problems among women especially among married women. Their happiness has been considered as well.

Findings

Seventy investigations in thirty-one nations compared the happiness of men and women. See section G 1.1 in part III of the Databook. Surprisingly, most did not find any difference. Only in a few nations did slight ones appear. Men appeared somewhat happier in Nigeria, Puerto Rico and Western Germany, while women tended to be somewhat happier in Brazil, France, Finland and Norway.

In the US and in Western Europe consistent sex-differences appeared only when the relationship was specified by age. In these countries elderly men tend to be more happy than elderly women and young men less happy than young women. The relation between happiness and age is linear in both sex-categories. In the Philippines a similar pattern was shown to exist.

In the US the picture remained unchanged after a specification by 'social rank'. However, in Finland (where women were happier) the relative unhappiness of men was most pronounced at the lowest end of the social ladder. In the US the relationship has been specified for 'ethnicity' and 'employment'. No differences appeared either.

In several nations comparisons through time can be made. In Italy and Western Germany men appear to have become relatively happier since 1948. In France women became happier relatively. In Britain, the Netherlands and the US no change occurred in the postwar decades.

Most of these investigations used indicators of 'overall happiness'. Comparisons of 'hedonic level' and 'contentment' have been made only in the US. Consistent differences did not appear either.

Discussion.

These findings raise at least two questions: the first is why women in western nations are not less happy, while it is so often claimed that they are more at risk both physically and mentally. The second is why - in western nations - women tend to become less happy when growing older, while men take more pleasure in life with the rising years.

Why are western women not less happy than men while displaying more mental and physical impairments? Let's begin by taking a closer look at the investigations that have shown lower well-being among women in western societies. Women have been seen to report more complaints about various aspects of their life; in particular about their intimate relations (Shaver & Freedman, 1976:29). Women appeared to complain more about their health as well. Consequently they pay more visits to doctors, spend more days in hospitals and more often fail to appear at their work (e.g. Nathanson, 1975). Psychiatric complaints also appeared relatively frequent among women. Not surprisingly they score higher on symptom inventories and are overrepresented among the clients of various psycho-therapeutic services (e.g. Gove, 1972b). Western women have furthermore appeared less equipped with some characteristics that are considered characteristic of mental effectiveness. They were shown to be less apt to 'accept themselves' (in particular their own body), to be less 'assertive' and less 'autonomous'. Women appeared also more prone to attempt suicide (Gove 1972a:205/6). Though adult females appear thus more vulnerable than adult males, no differences of this kind were observed between boys and girls. There are indications that they arise around adolescence. See Burke & Weir (1978:287) for more detail.

It has been shown to be unlikely that these differences are due to biological factors (Gove, 1972b:44; 1972a:204) or to response bias (Clancy & Gove, 1975). Explanations are sought in more stressful living conditions. It has for example been suggested that women in western society are generally confronted with more difficult conflicts than men (e.g. Burke & Weir, 1978: 287) and that being married is more advantageous for males than for females. (Gove, 1972a:205). These interpretations are eagerly accepted in feminist circles.

Yet this is only half of the truth. In spite of their more frequent complaints, women live longer in western nations. The difference in life expectancy of women amounts to more than five years! (Kurian, 1979:281/3). Notwithstanding the greater incidence of suicide attempts among females, successful suicide is in fact more frequent among males (Gove, 1972b:205).

Still it is remarkable that the greater lamentations of women in western countries are not paralleled by less positive responses to questions about happiness. Burke & Weir (1978:286) suggested three explanations for this inconsistency. The first is that women tend to respond in a socially desirable way, and would therefore be inclined to overstate their happiness. The second suggestion holds that both sexes are indeed equally happy, but that women are more aware of their emotional and physical problems than men or at least

more honest about them. The third explanation presupposes that life is actually less satisfying for women, but that women tend to resign themselves to their fate; as a result their responses to happiness questions would reflect mere 'contentment' rather than 'real happiness'. Let us consider these explanations in more detail.

Do women overstate their happiness? Possibly women - in our type of society - are indeed more vulnerable to social desirability pressures. Several investigations on 'conformism' demonstrated at least that women yield more easily to social pressure (Krech, Crutchfield & Ballachy, 1962:523/5). However, these same investigations showed great differences in conformism across situations. Hence it is not sure that women are more apt to pretend to be more happy than they in fact are when asked about in an interview situation; particularly because honesty is an important norm in that situation. Women have also been found more apt to disclose and discuss problems and negative feelings (Jourard & Richman, 1963; Burke & Weir, 1978:285). This tendency can counter balance an eventual tendency to comply with a norm to show off and possibly it even outweighs that.

Even if women were more inclined to present themselves more positively than is actually the case, the fact would still not explain the contradiction. If women understate unhappiness, they are likely to understate undesirable mental complaints as well.

Are women more open about their problems? Then there is the suggestion that women are apt to report more honestly about problems. Clancy & Gove (1975) considered that possibility. They corrected the scores on a symptom inventory on the basis of answers to several questions meant to indicate such response tendencies. To their astonishment the difference between males and females grew larger instead of smaller. Even if things had turned out the other way the argument would nevertheless have been unsatisfactory. Once again it is noted that response tendencies would affect happiness ratings as well.

Are women more resigned? People who have become resigned to deficient living conditions are more likely to respond positively to questions on 'contentment' than to questions about their 'hedonic level'. Contentment is primarily a matter of aspirations which one can lower to some extent, whereas hedonic level rather seems to reflect the gratification of undeniable bio-psychical needs. If the last suggestion of Burke & Weir is true, we can expect

that women report equal levels of contentment as men, but lower hedonic levels. As we have seen above ('findings' last lines) no differences of that kind show up, however. Both average hedonic level and average contentment appeared largely similar among males and females in the US.

All in all the suggestions of Burke & Weir are not convincing. Better explanations have not been offered as yet and have not come to my mind either. Hence the puzzle must remain unsolved.

Why do western men become more happy when getting older and women less happy?

Bell (1970:75) has suggested that this is because the sexual attractiveness of woman declines rapidly after young adulthood, while men remain in demand till after middle age. There may be some truth in this observation. Sexual attractiveness will probably bolster 'self-esteem' and it is at least helpful in establishing 'intimate relations'. As will appear later on both are likely to favor happiness. (To be demonstrated in the sections 7/6.1 and 6/4.1). Yet this explanation is not sufficient. Happiness seems only marginally related to outward attractiveness. (To be discussed in section 8/2a). Moreover happiness is probably not related to it at all among aged people, while the difference between males and females is most pronounced among the elderly.

Irrespective of sexual attractiveness 'marital status' may be involved. Women tend to marry at a younger age than men. In section 6/4.1a we will see that living alone or not is crucial to happiness in the western world; especially for young adults. Young women could therefore be happier on average than men of the same age. The ratio changes in the older age groups: after a divorce women remarry less often than men (Cherlin, 1981:29) and many elderly women lose their husband by death. Because women tend to marry men that are older and because they outlive men for about five years, far more women spend their last years as a widow. In section 6/4.1a we will see that widowed people tend to be less happy than the married in the modern western nations.

One could also imagine that the greater 'longevity' of women distorts the picture. If happiness declines with the years, there must be more unhappy women than unhappy men in the older age categories, more men passing away before the sufferings of old age make themselves felt. However the next section will show that age as such is largely unrelated to happiness in contemporary western society.

6/2.2 AGE-DIFFERENCES (A 3)

Several authors have claimed that happiness tends to decrease when one grows older. This would be due to, among other things, the 'paling of promising expectations', to the gradually 'declining vitality' and in the evening of life to 'failing health', 'loneliness' and to the idea of being both 'dependent and superfluous'. Some expect happiness to decline gradually from the first years of life, while others predict a rise from youth to middle age and then a decrease that continues in old age. This latter view attributes the rise in happiness in the first half of life to the fact that one requires many desirable things in that period, such as 'independence', 'one's own house', 'a partner', 'children', etc. See e.g. Campbell et al. (1976:156/8).

The idea that happiness tends to rise first and then declines enjoys considerable support in US public opinion. Most Americans consider the years around 55 to be the best ones. This is most apparent among young people; elderly respondents depict happiness more often as continuous. See Back & Bourgue (1970:251).

Findings.

A great many investigations inspected whether there are indeed differences in happiness between people of different ages. Seventy-seven investigations were performed in twenty-seven nations. All were cross-sectional ones. Surprisingly, happiness turned out to be largely unrelated to age. In most countries similar levels appeared in all categories.

Only in a few cases did slight differences show up. Elderly people were found somewhat happier in Italy, Norway, Nigeria and the Philippines. Some investigations in the US found slightly more happiness among the elderly as well, but most studies in that country did not, while a few rather found young people somewhat happier. Young people have also been found slightly happier in Belgium, Denmark and Western Germany anno 1948.

The curvilinear relationship - most Americans think of - did not appear either in these data. In fact only one out of twelve investigations in the US found somewhat more happiness among middle-aged people than among younger and older ones. Vague patterns of that kind also appeared in three of the twenty-seven investigations in other nations. Several others found middle-aged people rather less happy than average.

Several investigations have specified the relationship: Studies in Puerto Rico and the US discovered a slight negative relationship between happiness

and age in the lowest 'income' brackets. Specification by 'education' did not yield a comparable result. An investigation among 'handicapped people' in the US found a negative relationship as well. As we have seen above the specification for 'gender' also yielded consistent differences.

Four studies in the US focused on people of 60 years and older. Three of these found slightly lower hedonic levels among the oldest people. In one case the differences disappeared after control for 'health status'. A fourth study found no difference at all.

After 1975 a study among aged people in North Carolina found overall happiness to be unrelated to age. However, when checked for several socio-demographic variables (among other things 'ethnicity', 'marital status', 'social prestige' and 'education') a slight positive relationship appeared. (Kivett, 1976: 37).

Comparisons through time can be made in several western nations. Between 1945 and 1975 the relationship remained largely unchanged in the Netherlands and the US. There are indications that it did change from slightly negative to zero in Western Germany and from zero to slightly positive in Italy and France. As the questions were not wholly identical, we cannot be sure though. Between 1960 and 1978 identical questions were used in surveys in Canada and the US. Comparison suggests that happiness declined somewhat in the younger age categories (Atkinson, 1979:19; Campbell, 1981: 245).

Yet one important difference stands out. Though age is typically unrelated to 'overall happiness', it tends to be slightly negatively related to 'hedonic level' and slightly positively to 'contentment'. This pattern appears at least when the findings of different investigations are compared. Unfortunately not a single investigation has related age to all three happiness variants as yet.

The investigations concerned are all American ones. Still there are grounds for assuming that the pattern exists outside the US as well. As noted in 4/1a questions on overall happiness have been worded differently: some using the term 'happiness' and others referring to 'life-satisfaction'. Questions of the former kind probably tap affectively toned responses, while the latter stress the cognitive side. Responses to questions on 'happiness' tended to be relatively negative among the elderly, while responses to questions on 'life-satisfaction' were answered relatively positively. This pattern has been observed in several western nations. See among others Campbell et al. (1976:177-183).

Discussion.

These findings raise at least three questions. Firstly: why does the expected decline in happiness not occur in old age? Secondly, why does 'hedonic level' decline with age while 'contentment' rises? And thirdly, why are the findings not identical in all countries?

Why not a decline of overall happiness in old age? This section began with an enumeration of reasons why happiness would decrease with the rising of years, especially in old age. Several of these arguments referred to things that are indeed detrimental to happiness, among other things 'widowhood', 'ill health' and 'dwindling activity'. (Effects on happiness will be discussed in respectively sections 6/4.1a, 7/1.1 and 7/1.4). Though elderly people tend to be worse off in these respects, they are still not less happy on average. How is that possible? Five explanations come to mind.

Firstly Thomae & Kranshoff (1979) suggested that this is largely a matter of self-deceit. Most elderly people would be unable to face the fact that life is becoming less satisfying and stick to their views formed in better years. However, many other people must face misfortunes as well, for example younger people who fall seriously ill or get divorced. As a rule their appreciation of life drops somewhat as a result (See section 6/4.1a). It is difficult to see why things should work differently among the aged. In fact there are several better explanations.

A second explanation could be that we are dealing with a sampling error. In most Western nations part of the elderly live in nursing homes, probably the most deprived ones. Few samples covered institutionalized people and may thus have omitted the least happy people in this category, thus suggesting a greater happiness among the elderly than there actually is. Yet this bias cannot be too serious, the percentage of institutionalized aged being small. Moreover, it would still be remarkable that there are no age differences in happiness among the non-institutionalized.

In the third place it is possible that the absence of a difference in happiness between young and old is characteristic for the present generations only. The elderly people under review have witnessed a historically unique economic growth. Most live now in greater luxury and security than they had ever dreamed of. Hence they could be more satisfied with the material conditions of life than the younger generations who have never known anything else. Elderly Americans are indeed more satisfied with their standard of living than young Americans. However, they are also more satisfied with aspects of

life that have not improved through time, such as 'the weather' (Campbell et al., 1976:180). Moreover material conditions have not improved equally in all countries, while the happiness of the elderly appears almost everywhere equal to that of the young. Should such a cohort effect exist at all, it is likely to be modest at best.

A more realistic explanation seems that we are dealing with the result of selective survival. As we will see in more detail in section 7/1.1, unhappiness is detrimental to 'health' and unhappy people are at greater risk of dying prematurely. More unhappy people passing away than happy ones, average happiness can remain stable through age categories in spite of the fact that ageing involves in fact a reduction of it. Whereas there is little reason for assuming that the non-differences are due to other distortions, I presume that this selection effect veils a slight negative relation between happiness and age.

Finally it is possible that the hazards of old age are largely softened by acquiescing. This explanation is similar to Thomae & Kranshoff's suggestion, though 'acquiescence' is not identical to 'self-deceit'. It is not impossible that elderly people are more apt to resign themselves to deprivations that are not accepted in other age categories. Suffering is expected, perceived as normal and shared with one's contemporaries. Ericson (1969:259/261) depicts it even as a common developmental task to 'adapt to disappointments adherent to being'. In the earlier discussion about the happiness of women in western nations I pointed out that resignation is likely to give itself away in a discrepancy between 'hedonic level' and 'contentment', the former being lower than the latter. Such a discrepancy did not exist among females, but we have seen that it does exist among the aged. Hence there is good evidence for this explanation. Let's continue by considering this matter in more detail.

Why does hedonic level decline, while contentment rises? Let us start with the gradual decline in 'hedonic level' with the advancement of years. In the preceding section I suggested that hedonic level is relatively sensitive to the gratification of basic 'bio-psychical needs', while contentment rather reflects success in psychologically more surface-level 'aspirations'. When living-conditions become less favorable, one can adjust the latter but not the former. Contentment is then likely either to remain stable or to rise, and hedonic level to decline.

Considering the data in this light we could infer that ageing involves a diminished gratification of one or more undeniable 'needs'. There are good reasons for believing that this is true. In western society elderly people are

often subject to the frustration of several such needs. e.g. the generally recognized needs for 'belonging' (intimates passing away), 'social respect' (being dependent on attendants) and 'meaningfulness' (being denied responsibility and tasks, diminishing belief in life-hereafter). As yet the drop in hedonic level has been demonstrated in modern western nations only. Other cultures possibly do more justice to their aged members. Yet I would not be surprised if some decline in hedonic level turns out to be universal. As we will see in section 7/1.4 hedonic level acts as an accelerator of 'activity'. A gradual reduction of hedonic level could thus gear the ageing individual's behavioral patterns to fit in better with his dwindling forces. It is not unlikely that such a reduction of pleasantness of experience is to some extent biologically programmed and therefore recognizable everywhere in spite of cultural differences.

Next the observed rise in 'contentment' among elderly people in western nations. In this context it is worth remembering the above remarks on 'acquiescence'. In this vein Campbell et al. (1976:180) reported that elderly people tend to express more satisfaction with various details of life as well: among other things with their 'savings', their 'housing' their 'education' and even with the 'weather'. Only satisfaction with 'health' is an exception. Campbell c.s. interpret this as "aspirations becoming more realistic", unattainable desires gradually fading away and ceasing to influence evaluations. This adjustment would involve some reduction in the subjective quality of life. It becomes 'satisficing' rather than 'satisfying' (p.169).

Why the difference between nations? There are many reasons why happiness could relate differently to age in the various countries. Countries differ for instance in the 'material security' they offer to elderly persons and in the 'social roles' they award them. There is also cultural variation in the 'meta-physical meaning' attached to the sufferings involved in illness and dying. Yet it is difficult to draw sensible conclusions from the very small differences in happiness that appeared so far. There is at least no obvious correspondence between these differences and the characteristics of the countries concerned. Remember for instance that aged people in Norway appeared to be relatively happy, but in Denmark relatively unhappy. Such differences between otherwise so similar countries may be due to the complexity of the causal effects involved, but they may also be the result of technical error. The differences are small enough to have been caused by e.g. variation in the wording of the questions, sampling and categorization. Since there is an insufficient body of

carefully checked cross-national information, the question must remain unanswered.

6/2.3 MINORITY STATUS

In most countries so-called 'minorities' exist: categories of people who differ in some respect from the mainstream of society and who are for that reason more or less discriminated against. There are various such minorities, e.g. 'religious' minorities, 'ethnic' minorities, 'political' minorities and even 'sexual' minorities. The degree to which they are discriminated against and the terrain on which this occurs varies widely. Patterns of discrimination are moreover highly variable though time and culture. Categories that have a minority position in one country sometimes hold a prominent place in another. One could imagine minority status to be generally detrimental to happiness. It usually involves less favorable living conditions; in particular less 'legal security', less 'material comfort' and less 'social appreciation'. It could also be detrimental to psychological development, social depreciation harming among other things the development of a 'positive self-image'. Several investigations tried to demonstrate such effects empirically. Most did indeed find differences, though not always very strong ones.

a. Religion (R 2.2)

In 1960 Nigeria was socially divided along lines of religious denomination. At that time the rising Muslims were the most happy and the backward Pagans the least. The Christians were in-between. It is difficult to judge to what extent these differences are due to discrimination or to associated characteristics that have little to do with social dominance. At any rate the differences are clearly due to such effects on happiness rather than the reverse. It is unlikely that the lower happiness of Pagans results from the tendency of unhappy Nigerians to adopt Pagan beliefs.

In the Netherlands and the US no such differences exist at the present time. However, non-believers were still relatively unhappy in these countries not so long ago. See section 7/5.2a for more detail.

b. Immigrants (N 1.4)

Immigrants sometimes constitute a minority as well. Only one investigation has considered their happiness as yet. This is an investigation among elderly people in Boston, US. It compared the hedonic level of native born people and foreign born ones. The former appeared to feel better than the latter. However, this difference disappeared when verified for 'income'. This suggests that immigrant status did actually influence the joy in living as far as it involved a difficult start in economic life. It is unestablished to what extent this result is colored by response bias or spuriousness and whether these immigrants represent a typical happy or unhappy selection.

c. Homosexuals (S 3.3)

Though rapidly gaining social acceptance, homosexuals are still given the cold shoulder in most western societies. Hence it is not surprising that they turned out to be less happy than heterosexuals in the US in the 1970's. The differences appeared to be greater among blacks than among whites and greater among females than among males. White male homosexuals were in fact as happy as white male heterosexuals. Much appeared to depend on whether or not there was a steady partner. Homosexuals who had only short contacts with different partners or who had no regular contacts at all were very unhappy relatively. On the other hand homosexuals living with a steady partner appeared actually happier than heterosexuals living in pairs. This applied to both women and men (Bell & Weinberg, 1979:276/7:240). In section 6/4.1 the significance of a life partner will be discussed in more detail.

These findings can possibly be distorted by response bias or spuriousness. They are not very likely to result from effects of happiness on sexual preference. Though early unhappiness may sometimes play a role in the development of homosexuality, such effects seem too incidental to attribute them a role in this context.

d. Ethnic minorities (R 1)

The effect of ethnic minority status on happiness has been considered in two

countries: in post-revolutionary Cuba and in the US. Between 1946 and 1973 seventeen investigations dealt with this matter in that latter country.

Findings

Both in Cuba and in the US 'Black' people were found to be less happy than 'White' ones. Most investigations on this matter used indicators of overall happiness. One in Houston (US) considered hedonic level. It found no difference between Blacks and Whites. Two representative samples in the US in 1959 and 1971 found Blacks less contented than Whites.

Comparison through time in the US reveals a remarkable phenomenon. The difference in happiness between Blacks and Whites appears to have grown between 1946 and 1966. In 1946 Blacks and Whites were still almost equally happy: in some categories Blacks were even happier, e.g. in the category of semi-skilled and unskilled workers and among the elderly. Things were different in 1956 and 1966. At these times the happiness of Whites had increased, whereas Blacks appeared to have become less happy. This change was most pronounced in the higher social strata: Blacks with a good education, high income and a good job became considerably less happy than Whites at the same levels. At the lower end of the social ladder the differences in happiness between Blacks and Whites did not increase as much. The decrease in happiness among Blacks was also more pronounced among young adults than among the elderly and more pronounced in the liberal north of the US than in the conservative south. In the south the happiness of the Blacks had actually risen somewhat; modest rises were also noted among very old Blacks and among Black farmers and farm laborers.

Discussion

These findings are all the more remarkable because the position of American Blacks had improved in several respects during that period. Like all other Americans, Blacks profited from the startling economic growth in the post war decades and the discrimination against Blacks lessened considerably. These advancements did apparently not materialize in a greater appreciation of life. They rather seem to have stirred discontent. Manning Gibbs (1972) has tried to explain why.

Relative deterioration of the socio-economic position of Blacks? The first possibility he considered was whether Whites did not gain more than Blacks, the latter thus becoming more deprived relatively. There are indeed indications that the Whites gained somewhat more on some terrains.

'Employment' developed more favorably among Whites in the post-war decades and the 'quality of their houses' improved relatively more as well. On the other hand rises in 'income' were globally identical among Blacks and Whites; at least in the modal income categories. However, the percentage of Blacks in the highest income groups decreased somewhat. Yet Blacks gained more in the field of 'education'. Though the level of education did rise among Whites as well in the period concerned, the advancement of the Blacks was far greater. Consequently Blacks became better represented in 'prestigious jobs', especially at the middle levels. Living conditions for Blacks improved relatively in several other aspects as well; among other things in 'medical care' and in 'administration of justice'. These data do not support the notion that life for Blacks has deteriorated relatively in the US between 1946 and 1966. Hence the increased discontent cannot be explained that way, particularly not the discontent of the most successful Blacks (p. 18/21).

Adoption of White standards? Manning Gibbs suggests that the growing discontent among Blacks was due to the adoption of White standards. In 1946 Blacks evaluated their life largely on the basis of Black standards. In as far as socio-economic success was concerned, these standards were lower than White ones. In spite of their relatively unfortunate socio-economic position, Black evaluations of this aspect of life could thus turn out almost as positive as White evaluations based on White standards. Gibbs suggests Blacks have changed their own standards for White middle class ones and thus have become less contented in the following decades. Though gradually less deprived in an objective sense, the remaining differences caused more subjective pain.

Manning Gibbs cannot demonstrate this supposed change of standards as such. However, he argues convincingly, that Blacks became less isolated since World War II and were more confronted with the White middle class way of life. In this context he refers to the mass emigration from the rural South to the cities in the north of the US, to the influence of the educational system, to the spread and popularization of the mass media and last but not least to developments at the ideological level such as the civil rights movement (p. 67/69).

It is indeed true that the drop in happiness was most pronounced among the Blacks who were most intensely confronted with the dominant White lifestyle. As we have seen it was most apparent among Blacks with good jobs (many contacts with White colleagues), among Blacks with a good education (schools being instruments of enculturation par excellence), among Blacks

living in the cities in the North (where racial segregation was generally less strict) and among young Blacks (who were generally more oriented to White culture than the elderly).

So far Manning Gibbs provides a plausible explanation for both the general drop in happiness among Blacks and the fact that this drop was more pronounced in some categories of Blacks than in others. Yet one thing is not explained: what is lacking in the lives of successful Blacks? Having achieved White standards of success these people cannot suffer from awareness of previously accepted socio-economic deprivation. Why then are they still less happy than equally successful Whites?

Inflated expectations? Manning Gibbs did recognize this problem. Hence he considered the possibility that successful Blacks have in fact adopted even higher standards than Whites on the same steps of the social ladder. Referring to Geschwender (1964:249) he suggests that the rapid advancements can have brought forth 'unrealistic expectations'; in particular among the actually most successful Blacks. However, Manning Gibbs cannot provide independent evidence for such a development (p. 75/77). Moreover too high expectations are usually cut down rather soon, especially when they hurt that much.

Greater vulnerability to social rejection? For myself I would rather follow Wentholt's (1980:128/137) lead, by taking into account that increased exposure to White culture involves more than merely the adoption of their surface standards of social success. Enculturation also causes Blacks to see themselves through White eyes, thus sharpening their awareness of current prejudices against Blacks. The awareness of being rejected because of the color one's skin is all the more apparent the more successful one is in terms of White standards of socio-economic success. Moreover rejection is likely to hit successful Blacks harder, these people being mostly less rooted in an authentic Black subculture and hence less supported by their own kin. Thus the successful penetration of individual Blacks into the White world involves a greater vulnerability for an actually diminishing social rejection: a dilemma many emancipation movements are faced with. Social rejection can obviously affect happiness negatively. It can for instance hurt 'self esteem', which is firmly related to happiness. (To be demonstrated in section 7/6.1). In its turn crippled self esteem can impair other sources of happiness: such as the 'notion of being in control of one's fate' (relevance for happiness discussed in section 7/2.1) and the ability to function

in 'intimate relations' (Impact on happiness discussed in sections 6/4 and 7/1.3a). There is evidence that increased confrontation with Whites does indeed lower Black self-esteem in the contemporary US: at least in the short term. Rosenberg (1979:102) found for instance less self-esteem among Black adolescents who attend desegregated schools than among those attending segregated ones. This problem has been recognized by several champions of Black emancipation who have tried to shape a positive identity for their people ('Black is beautiful'). Apparently these efforts had not yet had much success in 1966.

6/2.4 INCOME (I 1)

Income is generally seen as an important source of happiness. When asked what could make their life more worthwhile, Americans in the 1970's typically referred to a raise in income' (Campbell, 1981:68). Similar opinions were observed around that time in Britain (Hall, 1976:49) and in France in the 1960's (Brock, 1965:84). Curiously, happiness was actually not very strongly linked with income in these countries in these decades. As we will see, a once positive relationship had in fact already faltered.

More than thirty investigations in fourteen countries inspected the relationship between happiness and income. Eight of these were performed in non-western countries, six in Europe and the rest in the US. All seem to refer to the 'family income', which is generally higher than the 'personal income' of separate household members, particularly higher than the incomes of housewives and living-in children. Not all reports are explicit on this point.

Findings

Rich people appeared generally happier than their poorer compatriots. In his earlier mentioned worldwide investigation Cantril found an association which equals $\gamma + .38$. This relationship was not equally pronounced in all countries. Correlations above that level appeared in Brazil, the Dominican Republic, India, Israel, Nigeria, Panama and the Philippines. In western nations correlations were typically around $+ .20$; e.g. in Britain, the Netherlands, the US, Western Germany and Yugoslavia. Correlations were also low in Cuba just after the revolution and in Puerto Rico. In not one of the fourteen nations was happiness found to be unrelated to income.

It is worth knowing whether the relationships are linear or not. It has

often been suggested that income is subject to a law of diminishing returns. One could hence expect a curvilinear relationship, which more or less equals the one that appeared between average happiness in nations and national income. (Section 6/ 1.1a).

Surprisingly, the relationships are typically linear; not only in the US and in western Europe, but also in developing countries.

Several American studies have specified the relationship. One found a stronger correlation among 'physically handicapped persons' than in a matched group of 'normals'. (Matched a.o. for 'income level'). As we have seen above, studies that specified between 'Blacks' and 'Whites' found different correlations as well. Elaboration for 'gender', 'age' and 'education' did not show differences.

In several countries time-trends can be observed. As we have seen in the preceding section things changed considerably among Blacks in the US between 1946 and 1966. Initially happiness was unrelated to income among Blacks, but gradually a negative relationship appeared. Among Whites a modest positive relationship remained during the post-war period. Data published after 1975 show that correlations dropped in two other western countries during more recent decades. In Western Germany the difference in happiness between income categories diminished considerably between 1954 and 1975. People with low incomes grew happier during that period (Noelle-Neuman, 1977:211). In Canada a similar trend was observed between 1968 and 1978. The correlation between happiness and income dropped from $r = + .18$ to $r = + .09$ (Atkinson, 1979:15).

Most investigations used indicators of overall happiness. A few also assessed 'hedonic level' or 'contentment' and yielded similar results.

Discussion

These findings raise several questions: why happiness corresponds with income at all, and why the cross-temporal and cross-national differences exist. Before dealing with these questions we must first ascertain whether we might not be dealing with artefacts.

Artefacts? The statistical correspondence between happiness and income could at least be partly due to desirability bias. It would for instance seem more acceptable for poor people to admit to being unhappy than for rich people to do so. If this is the case, we can expect lower correlations in investigations using anonymous questionnaires than in investigations using face-to-face interviews. Unfortunately the available data do not allow such a comparison.

Yet we have seen in section 3/1.1f that desirability bias is generally modest. The chance that it has influenced the correlations is thus at best small.

Another possibility is that poor people are more likely to interpret happiness questions as referring to the 'satisfaction with their standard of living' and hence answer these questions less positively. That chance seems greater where questions on 'overall happiness' and 'contentment' are concerned than with questions on 'hedonic level', the former two being semantically closer to material fortune than the latter. As we have seen responses on all three questions relate identically to income. This effect is thus unlikely to have played a significant role.

A more serious possibility is that the correlations are spurious. They could for example be due to common variance with 'health': health influencing both happiness and income, while income and happiness as such are in fact unrelated. As we will see in section 7/1.1 health is indeed likely to influence happiness. Several other personal characteristics that will appear to influence happiness can possibly be held responsible for a spurious relationship as well, e.g. 'mental effectiveness' (section 7/1.2), 'activity level' (section 7/1.4) and 'perceived fate control' (section 7/2.1). The same applies to several factors discussed in this chapter, such as 'gender' (section 6/2.1) and 'education' (section 6/2.5). Effects of this kind can be identified by means of statistical elaboration. Above we have already seen that the checking for 'age', 'gender' and 'education' did not change the picture in the US. The observed difference between physically handicapped people and normal ones might lead one to suggest that 'physical validity' works as an intervening variable. More findings on this matter have been published after 1975. Based on data from the US Campbell et al. (1976:368) showed that the correlation between happiness and income remained almost as strong after mutual verification for e.g. 'intelligence', 'health' and 'education'. Andrews & Withey (1976:139) verified even more variables in a US data set: 'family life-cycle stage', 'age', 'education', 'race' and 'gender'. Again the relationship appeared to remain almost equally strong.

So far the correlations seem to be reasonably solid; at least insofar as the US is concerned. Hence we can proceed with the causal effects that may be involved.

Could happiness affect income? Contrary to the cases of 'gender' and 'ethnicity' we must now reckon with the possibility that the correlations reflect an effect of happiness. 'Gender' and 'ethnicity' are entirely independent of

the individual's behavior, while income-level depends to some extent on it; at least in open societies. As satisfaction with life may have behavioral consequences, it may also affect one's chances of earning a good income. That may seem odd at first sight: it did at least to Easterlin (1974:104) who wrote: "...to argue that happiness causes such class differences (he refers to income — RV) is akin to arguing that, where happiness is correlated to age, happiness causes age differences ...". Yet we will see in section 6/4.1d that pleasant affect facilitates 'social functioning'. As such, happy people can be at an advantage in at least some professions, particularly in professions that involve negotiating and entertainment. We will also see in section 6/4.1d the happy probably have better marriage chances. Happy people -women in particular- are therefore more likely to marry well-off partners and hence to report relatively higher family incomes. In section 7/1.1 we will moreover see that happiness fosters 'health' and in section 7/1.4 we will meet with evidence that pleasant affect enhances 'activity'. In these ways happiness can also contribute to the chance of earning a good income. Note that the variables 'health' and 'activity' are assigned another role here than in the foregoing discussion on the possible 'spuriousness' of the relationship. They are responsible for spurious correlation insofar as they affect both happiness and income. At the same time 'health' and 'activity' can be fostered by a positive appreciation of life. Hence they can also figure as a link in a causal chain between happiness and income.

Though this is all possible in principle, things probably do not work that way. We will see later on that people who surpassed their fathers on the social ladder are not happier than average and that the ones who managed to gain a high income in spite of little education are not particularly satisfied with life either. See respectively sections 6/2.7d and 6/2.7e.

How could income affect happiness? Next the more common notion that money makes for happiness. What mechanisms could be involved? I will not try to answer that question exhaustively, the following remarks must suffice: Firstly, a minimal level of income is obviously needed for the gratification of some undeniable organic needs. Income must be sufficient to buy food, clothing and lodging. Remember the discussion in 6/1.1a. Next a good income is evidently helpful in the gratification of less urgent needs as well, e.g. needs for 'enjoyment', 'stimulation' and 'comfort'. To some extent it can also buy 'security', 'companionship' and 'recognition'; in some conditions more easily than in others. For these latter purposes the relative level of income is generally more crucial than the absolute level.

Apart from their effects on purchasing power, income differences have social-symbolic consequences as well. Being poor is regarded as a shame in most societies; at least for some categories of people, while being 'rich' is generally praised. This is likely to affect happiness, the need for social recognition probably being universal. Here the absolute level of income is again largely irrelevant. What really counts is that one earns more than another.

Remarkably, the 'subsistence' function of income does not seem to be more crucial for happiness than its 'luxury' benefits and its social' effects. Remember that the relationship between happiness and income has been found to be linear; even in India, where many people live on a subsistence minimum. Though the relationship does not become less pronounced when this level is exceeded, it is still likely to become more variable across situations, the gratification of non-subsistence-needs being more dependent on differing standards of comparison, beliefs and values.

It must not be forgotten that income can exert negative effects on happiness as well. The very earning of it may require considerable frustrations and the recognition of doing well can bring galling social obligations in its trail. There is moreover the complication that aspirations tend to rise with success, sometimes annulling the above mentioned advantages.

The actual impact of all these effects is obviously highly dependent on various situational factors and personal characteristics, necessitating multiple process analysis. The correlations found reflect a balance of effects (insofar as they are not due to bias, spuriousness, or effects of happiness). Let us therefore take a look at the situations in which the balance turns out differently.

Why is it stronger in developing countries? One answer to this question has been suggested by Cantril (1965:26). He attributed the cross-national differences he found to 'income-security', a good level of income being more crucial if one cannot rely on a collective social security system.

A related explanation could be that people live closer to the subsistence minimum in these countries. Differences in income could therefore be felt more strongly and hence influence happiness more. This explanation would suggest a trend towards diminishing happiness returns of income increases, which as we have seen did not materialize in curvilinear relationships in the countries concerned. Apparently the other benefits of income count more in developing countries as well.

Still another explanation could be that the differences in income are relatively great in the countries concerned. It is indeed true that around 1960

income differences were greater in the developing countries under review than in the US, Canada and the Netherlands (Cromwell, 1977:264/5).

Finally it must be remembered that happiness may have mattered more for the chances of earning a good income in these countries. Economic success may have depended more on 'health', 'contactual abilities' and 'activity level' and could thus be more influenced by differences in happiness. It can hardly be established whether or not this is the case. There are some reasons for assuming that the economic struggle is somewhat harder in these countries in some respects, but it is also apparent that better capacities and greater efforts do not always guarantee success there; ascribed criteria often being more decisive in the allocation of well paying jobs than merit.

Israel does not fit in too well with these explanations. Happiness was quite strongly related to income there in 1960. Yet that country provided a reasonable income security at that time, it was relatively affluent and income inequality was not too great. Cuba doesn't fit in either. In spite of a low standard of living, income was only modestly related to happiness there. Apparently more differentiating variables are involved than the few marked here.

Why decreasing in western nations? Relatively poor people in western nations are not threatened with starvation or the like. Yet they are subject to all the other effects touched on above: in particular they are more likely to find themselves below the level of luxury that is currently considered minimal. Probably for that reason happiness is still modestly related to income in the West. The further decrease of this modest relationship during the last decades could be due to the gradual reduction of income differences that took place in the nations concerned. Progressive tax skimmed high incomes and social security eliminated the once existing category of 'poor' people. In the 1950's this trend towards greater income equality was apparent in all OECD countries. In the 1960's and the early 1970's it continued in France, Italy, Japan and the Netherlands. However, this continuation was less consistent in Western Germany and Britain during that period, while in Canada and the US a marginal increase in inequality has occurred (Sawyer, 1976:26). The absence of a further decrease of inequality after 1965 in Canada is surprising, because the correlation between happiness and income nevertheless dropped there between 1968 and 1978. This suggests that other developments were involved as well. Possibly western people came to attach less significance to income differences. This may be part of what Inglehart (1977:27/39) coined as the trend towards a 'Post-Materialistic' value orientation.

Harking back to the possibility that correlations are due to the effects of

happiness on chances of earning a good income, we must also consider the possibility that income became less dependent on happiness-related personal characteristics such as 'health', 'energy' and 'social-ability'. Several right wing social critics have indeed complained that the level of earnings becomes ever less a matter of capacity and zest. Yet they have not convincingly proved their point so far.

6/2.5 EDUCATION (E 1.1)

It has often been suggested that a good school education paves one's way to later happiness. Rodgers & Groombridge (1976:21) write for example: "Learning makes for happiness because it is through learning that we influence the environment instead of being dominated by it and that we discover and develop the best in ourselves and overcome the pain and frustrations of our asymmetrical personalities ...". In a similar vein Barrow (1980:136) has remarked that " ...there is evidence that education, conceived in terms of the promotion of knowledge and understanding for their own sakes, can make a direct contribution to happiness. For we have evidence that low cognitive inflexible and extremist people are relatively unhappy ... Education is more or less precisely designed to remove such characteristics". These views are widely shared. All over the world people tend to attribute their own unhappiness to lack of education nowadays (Cantril, 1960:269). Americans are no exception to that rule (Campbell et al., 1976:385). Yet we will see that the most highly educated people are not always the most happy.

Findings

Fifty-one investigations dealt with this matter. Twenty-one of these in the US, fifteen in other western countries and the rest in various non-western nations. Generally highly educated people appear more happy than the little educated. Cantril's worldwide investigation found an association which equals $\gamma + .35$. High correlations were observed in Brazil, the Dominican Republic, Israel, Panama, the Philippines and Yugoslavia. Lower but still significant relationships appeared in Italy, India, France, Mexico, Nigeria, Norway, Puerto Rico and the US. On the other hand, there are several countries in which happiness was shown to be unrelated to educational level. Non-significant correlations were found in Australia, Britain, Cuba and Western Germany. In the Netherlands both positive and slightly negative ones were

observed. Negative relationships were recently also demonstrated in the US (Wilkening & McGranahan, 1978: 221) and in Canada (Atkinson, 1979:15).

Mostly the relation appeared unaffected by 'age' and 'gender'. However, in the US four investigations found it to be strongly affected by 'income'. In one of these the relationship disappeared totally after checking for income. The others found it remaining only in the lowest income categories and becoming sometimes even negative in the higher ones. In a Canadian sample the correlation dropped from + .06 to -.05 after checking for income (Atkinson, 1979:15). The same was observed in Northern Wisconsin, US in 1974 (Wilkening & McGranahan, 1978:221). However, in Puerto Rico and Yugoslavia more sizable correlations did remain after checking for income. In the US happiness furthermore appeared to be positively related to education among Whites, but negatively among Blacks.

The relationship between education and happiness is not always linear. Sometimes it levels off at the higher educational levels and sometimes it is U-shaped. Consistent patterns cannot be detected.

In a few countries time trends can be observed. In the Philippines education seems to have become more closely related to happiness in the last few decades. In the US a moderate relationship remained among Whites between 1946 and 1966, but dropped below zero among Blacks. Between 1957 and 1978 the correlation decreased in the entire US population (Campbell, 1981:242). The same trend appears in the Netherlands. In 1949 well educated Dutchmen were still happier than their less educated compatriots, whereas in the sixties they appeared to be slightly less happy relatively. There is evidence that the correlation between happiness and education also decreased in Canada between 1968 and 1978 (Atkinson, 1979:15).

So far we have been discussing the investigations that used indicators of 'overall happiness'. A few investigations related education to 'hedonic level' and 'contentment'. Their results are again similar.

Discussion

These results are intriguing: it is especially intriguing to question why happiness is more strongly related to education in poor countries than in rich ones and why the relationship has faltered in the rich countries during the last few decades. Before entering into these questions we must again establish that we are not dealing with statistical artefacts and explore the ways in which happiness could affect educational success and vice versa.

Artefacts? As in the case of 'income' it is possible that the positive correlations

are in part due to desirability bias; less well educated people being more likely to admit themselves unhappy. This time there is an indication that this effect cannot be very pronounced. As we have seen the relationship disappeared in several western nations. There is little reason for assuming that lack of education has become less acceptable an excuse for being unhappy there.

Another source of bias could be that highly educated people tend to interpret happiness questions differently than the less well educated; educated people could interpret abstract terms like 'happiness' or 'satisfaction' differently or they could react differently to inquiries of this kind anyway. Once more the observed changes in western nations render this interpretation improbable. There is little reason for assuming that such differences in interpretation should have faded in these countries during the last decades.

It seems more likely that the correlations are spurious to some extent. As in the case of income they can be due to common variance with 'health', 'mental effectiveness', 'activity level', 'autonomy', and 'self esteem'. This is the more likely if one recognizes that several of these characteristics have appeared to develop less well in social milieus that do not encourage educational success. Consequently one can also expect the social 'milieu of origin' to work as a source of spuriousness: lower class milieu hindering both educational success and fostering the development of personal characteristics that are detrimental to happiness. Unfortunately none of these possibilities has been checked as yet. For the time being it remains unclear to what extent the correlations are spurious.

Still it is worthwhile assuming for a moment that there was, at least in some countries, a real positive correlation between happiness and education and then to explore the mechanisms that were possibly involved. A positive correlation could then mean both that education favored happiness and that happiness added to educational achievement. Let's consider that latter possibility first.

How could happiness influence educational success? First of all, there are indications that happy pupils do better in school. In the US they have been shown to earn better grades, even when they do not score higher on intelligent tests. (See respectively sections E 1.2.2 and C 1.3 of the Databook. These studies will be reported in more detail in section 7/1.3.) Yet it is evident that these findings can also be interpreted as indicating that pupils who do well in school become happier as a result.

Then the question of how happiness could affect educational success. I cannot imagine strong direct effects. At best I can imagine that unhappiness

can sometimes strengthen aversion against school and hence trigger dropping-out. It seems more likely to me that joy in living influences school-success indirectly by fostering the development of characteristics that facilitate learning. As noted earlier, joy in living is likely to enhance 'physical health' (to be discussed in section 7/1.1) and 'activity level' (to be discussed in section 7/1.4). Possibly it also promotes 'mental effectiveness' (section 7/1.2), 'autonomy' (section 7/2.1) and 'self-esteem' (section 7/6.1). All these characteristics are likely to add to the chances of doing well in school. Hence they can work as a link in a causal chain from happiness to educational level. They can do so only insofar as they are the result of earlier happiness. As far as the roles are reversed they produce spurious correlations (discussed above). Unfortunately it is as yet impossible to assess the degree to which causality works in one way or another. Yet the data to be presented in the sections 6/2.7d and 6/2.7e do not suggest this effect to be very powerful.

How could education influence happiness? This question has been paid more attention in the literature. Four effects have been suggested.

Firstly several authors on this subject observed that well educated people have a better chance of earning a good 'income' and can therefore take more pleasure in life than their poorly educated compatriots. The degree to which income serves as a link in a causal chain between level of education and happiness can be assessed empirically by means of statistical control. As we have seen above, income does indeed explain part of the common variance of happiness and education. This was most clear in the US, though some correlation remained at the lowest income levels. Probably differences in 'quality of work' and 'work prestige' are involved as well. Highly educated people tend to have nicer and more prestigious jobs, which do not always pay that much, but which can still contribute positively to happiness. As we will see in section 6/3.1b, white collar workers do indeed appear happier than blue collar workers; low and medium level office workers even outrank skilled manual workers. Another noteworthy thing is that all samples of adults cover some proportion of highly educated people who are still involved in a training. These persons do not earn much at present, but in their evaluation of life they are likely to take an advance on what they expect to gain in the future.

A second suggestion is that education involves greater rewards than just a better chance on the labor market. It is claimed to contribute to higher causes as well, make people more 'self reliant' more 'creative', more 'firm in moral dilemmas', etc. Remember the quotations at the beginning of this section. Several ends educationalists claim to pursue are likely to contribute

to happiness. As noted earlier there is evidence that happiness is favored by 'mental maturity' (7/1.2c), by various 'social abilities' (7/1.3a), by belief in the possibility of affecting one's own lot' (7/2.1) and by 'self acceptance' (7/6.1). If school education does indeed contribute to the development of these characteristics, well educated people must stand a better chance of becoming happy than poorly educated ones. However, there exists genuine doubt about the reality value of these pretentions. There is doubt as to whether schools are appropriate instruments for such ends at all (e.g. Husen, 1981:152/3) and it has even been suggested that current programs and practices result in the reverse: confining adolescents to the school benches and thus keeping them away from real life experiences and responsibilities (e.g. Illich, 1970). I do not presume to express an opinion on this matter. Yet I do want to call attention to the finding that happiness was unrelated to educational level at the higher income categories in the US and that the relationship is gradually disappearing in western nations. Though this doesn't definitely tarnish the educationalists' pretentions, it is hardly a boost to them either; at least not insofar as average programmes in the past sixty years are concerned.

Thirdly several educationalists have stressed that school education may contribute to happiness by fitting pupils out with the 'right' values. This view is echoed in the above quotation by Barrow, when referring to the prevention of 'extremism' by school education. This argument is a very dubious one. Though it is probably true that schools can transmit values, there is little guarantee that they focus on values that are superior in any sense; nor that they avoid glorifying 'extremist' values. Over and above this we will see in section 7/5.1 that happiness has been shown to be largely unrelated to value priorities. The few differences that appear would suggest moreover that education rather fosters values that are detrimental to happiness. As we will see happiness was found negatively related to emphasis on typical educationalist values, such as 'knowing' and 'understanding', while it was positively related to adherence to 'hedonic values', which are mostly not particularly cherished in schools.

A last theme that figures in the discussion is that education can 'widen one's horizon'. Principle programmes of educationalists tend to stress the positive side of that effect. Education would confront people with superior and more varied satisfactions and would thereby open doors to a more satisfying life. However, education can also open windows to things that stay out of reach and thus foster discontent. This line of thought has been followed by Campbell et al. (1976), when trying to account for the

unexpectedly small difference in happiness between highly educated Americans and poorly educated ones in the 1970's. They attributed feelings of 'relative deprivation' to the former and a 'restricted horizon' to the latter (p. 140-145). Not knowing what is what, uneducated people would be contented with the status quo; even when this does not meet their true needs. In line with my analysis of similar claims on the happiness of women and elderly people (respectively in the sections 6/2.1 and 6/2.2) we can then expect highly educated people to report relatively high hedonic level but low 'contentment', the reverse being the case with uneducated people. Andrews & McKennel (1980:11) claim that this is indeed the case. However, their indicators are not sufficiently sharp to justify that conclusion. Their indicator of hedonic level is all right, but, instead of measuring contentment independently they use the variance in overall happiness that remains when hedonic level is controlled (what they call the 'cognitive' aspect of happiness). As we have seen above, the present data rather suggest that hedonic level and contentment are equally strongly related to education. Unfortunately they cannot be conclusive either because they are based on different populations.

Obviously there is more to be said about the effects extended education can possibly have on happiness in the long run. Yet these few remarks must do to give at least a taste of the complexities involved.

Why stronger in poor countries? In the discussion on factors that may be responsible for a spurious relationship I mentioned the 'social milieu of origin'. This factor may have inflated the correlation more in the poor countries than in the rich ones, chances of a good education being less equally distributed and milieu differences having a greater impact on happiness in the former than in the latter.

Earlier I have already remarked that the effect of happiness on 'income' could be stronger in the poor countries; harder economic competition setting higher demands on happiness-dependent personal characteristics. Possibly educational selection is harder as well in these countries. However, there is no certainty about the relative size of that effect either. In fact it is not certain that it exists at all.

Differences in education may also matter more for 'income', 'quality of work' and 'social prestige' in the poor countries and hence have a greater impact on happiness there. However, it does not seem probable that education affects personality formation more effectively in poor countries. As for the 'broader horizons' it provides, education is at the same time more likely to

enhance awareness of shortcomings in one's living conditions; school and universities often functioning as a window to the West.

The case of 'personality building' excepted, all the effects that could create a statistical relationship between happiness and education are likely to be more pronounced in the poor countries. Not only the ones that make for a positive correlation, but also the last mentioned one that would work the other way.

Why decreasing in modern western countries? The dwindling relationship between happiness and education is obviously related to the previously discussed decreasing significance of 'income'. Not only became income less prominent a predictor of happiness, but educational level became less predictive for income as well. The relative earnings of university educated members of the work force dropped for instance considerably both in the US and the Netherlands between 1900 and 1970 (Tinbergen, 1975:103/4). Similar trends for broader categories were demonstrated by Ritzen (1981: 266) for the Netherlands between 1965 and 1972 and by Freeman & Hollomon (1975) for the US between 1954 and 1974. There are also indications that a good school education has become less sure a ticket for an interesting job. Braverman (1974) argues that more and more diplomas are now required for increasingly dull tasks.

Still another explanation could be that schools became less successful in the field of 'personality building'. However, we have seen that there is doubt about school education adding to happiness in that manner anyway. If it ever has, there is little reason to expect these effects to have decreased. The reverse would rather seem more probable: personality building having become more central a goal in schools.

One last possibility is that the negative effect of 'too wide horizons' has gradually become larger, thus annulling the otherwise the positive effects of school education. Notions of the good life and the right society that are implicitly or explicitly professed in schools could have been withdrawn further from current reality, and world problems, such as war, economic exploitation and pollution could have been given greater emphasis. Several explanations of the student revolts in the 1960's followed that theme. Some of these stressed that schools profess increasingly utopic ideas, the institution of education acquiring more and more independence and teachers becoming more 'unworldly'. Though this claim can be easily illustrated, it appeared hard to prove. A conclusion is therefore once more out of reach.

The decreasing happiness return of education in western nations is certain-

ly worth a more detailed investigation. For the purpose of this book these tentative remarks must do.

6/2.6 OCCUPATIONAL PRESTIGE

Next to 'income' and 'education', public opinion associates happiness with 'occupational prestige' in particular where the happiness of men is concerned (e.g. Ranste on the basis of data from Finland in the 1970's; Feather, 1975 on the basis of data from Australia 1973). As yet only a few investigations have inspected to what extent happiness is actually related to occupational prestige. Though many more investigations claim to have dealt with the matter, most considered in fact differences in occupation as such, e.g. differences in 'skill level' and differences between 'manual' and 'non-manual' work. Such differences tend to be highly related to occupational 'prestige' but they cannot be equated with it. The relation between happiness and work characteristics will be discussed in 6/3.2. Here I will deal with the relationship of happiness to the relative esteem the general public attaches to different occupations. Most investigations on this matter work with 'prestige hierarchies' that are established by means of public opinion studies. These hierarchies appeared essentially similar all over the contemporary world; peasant societies excepted (Treiman, 1977:78). Some investigations merely make do with a global ranking made by the interviewer. A related but distinct matter is the 'self-perceived job-prestige'. I will deal with its relationship to happiness separately.

An investigation in the US has related happiness to all three of the job related phenomena mentioned here: to 'kind of work' (blue vs. white collar), to 'public prestige of occupation' and to 'self-perceived occupational prestige'. It found that all have a slight independent correlation to happiness (Bradburn, 1969:191/205).

a. Job-prestige as perceived by others (W 2.4)

Only six investigations considered this matter. Three of these were performed in the US, two in the Netherlands and one in Finland. All found small positive correlations, which mostly did not reach the level of significance.

In the US the relationship appeared similar among males and females and

similar among blue- and white-collar workers. Female blue-collar workers appeared to be an exception; in this category a pronounced negative relationship was found. In the Netherlands no difference between males and females showed up, but in Finland the relationship turned out to be negative among the latter and positive among the former. One of the Dutch investigations specified by 'age', but found no differences. This latter investigation also inspected whether the relationship is linear or not. It found a bell-shaped curve: happiness being highest at the medium occupational levels. A study in northern Wisconsin, US, checked the relationship for 'education', 'income' and 'level of living'. The small correlation passed this test successfully (Wilkening & McGranahan, 1978:221).

All these investigations used indicators of 'overall happiness'. One American investigation moreover related occupational prestige to 'hedonic level'. It found a slight positive correlation as well.

The Finnish study furthermore considered the relationship between men's occupational prestige and the happiness of their non-employed wives. As in the case of the men this correlation was slightly negative. One of the American studies related the happiness of retired people to the prestige level of their former occupation. Surprisingly a stronger association appeared than among the working ones. The difference remained after checking for 'income' and 'education'.

b. Self-perceived occupational-prestige (W 2.4)

An investigation in Poland and one in the US both found a slight positive relationship between happiness and self-perceived occupational-prestige. The American study had also related happiness to job-prestige as perceived by the general public. The relationship with self-perceived job-prestige appeared to be stronger. When job-prestige as perceived by the general public was checked statistically a small correlation still remained, especially at the higher (public) prestige levels. Among both white collar workers and blue collar workers a small correlation remained as well.

c. Self-perceived job-advancement (S 5.3)

Not surprisingly two investigations in the US also found a slight positive relationship between happiness and self-perceived job-advancement during the

last ten years. The relationship appeared again most pronounced at the higher public prestige levels. Both used indicators of 'hedonic level'. An investigation in the Netherlands found perceived job advancement unrelated to 'overall happiness'.

d. Discussion

As in the preceding paragraphs we must recognize that the correlations may result from response bias. Similar sources may be involved as in the cases of 'income' and 'education'. It is also possible once again that the correlations are largely spurious: variables such as 'activity level', 'general mental effectiveness' and 'social ability' could be responsible for a spurious effect. Yet we saw that 'income' and 'education' were not; at least not in northern Wisconsin, US.

The correlations can again be interpreted as signifying that a positive appreciation of life facilitates the climbing of the social ladder. The mechanisms involved could be largely similar to the ones mentioned in the discussions on 'income' and 'education'. Yet the same empirical objection applies as well: climbers do not appear as particularly happy persons in contemporary western society. (To be demonstrated in section 6/2.7d).

Insofar as occupational prestige adds to happiness, it could do so in at least two ways: Firstly, occupational prestige is evidently a source of satisfaction in itself. Everyone likes to be respected, some even yearn for such respect. This direct effect is likely to result from 'self-perceived occupational level' rather than from the 'actual social-prestige'. It is probably not equally strong in all societies and among all kinds of people. Secondly, several more indirect effects can play a role. Presumably 'actual' prestige adds to some living conditions that have appeared important for happiness; it will generally reduce the chances of falling victim to arbitrary treatment (relevance for happiness discussed in section 6/1.2), it will mostly facilitate joining voluntary organizations (impact on happiness to be discussed in section 6/3.2) and - at least insofar as males are concerned- it raises marriage chances (section 6/4.1a). Respectful treatment by others can also promote the development of several personal characteristics that appear beneficial to happiness; among other things the 'belief that one controls one's own fate' and 'self respect' (sections 7/2.1 and 7/5.1).

Taking all these possibilities into account, it is remarkable that the correlations are still so small in the nations under review.

6/2.7 GLOBAL SOCIAL RANK

Several investigators related happiness to what they casually refer to as 'social rank', 'socio-economic status' or 'social class'. Most focused on present rank and showed that people at the top of the social ladder are generally more satisfied with life than people at the bottom. Two subtly differing phenomena have been involved: 'class membership as attributed by impartial outsiders' and 'self assigned status'. Most investigations dealt with the former phenomenon. Their findings are enumerated in subsection a. The few that dealt with the latter are reported sub b. Next a few investigations considered the relationship between happiness and social milieu of origin. The results are represented under c. Some investigators went on to relate happiness to differences between status of the family of origin and present social rank. They compared the happiness of people who climbed the social ladder with the ones that tumbled down and people who changed rank with the ones who stayed at the same level. These findings are summarized in subsection d. Finally some have taken a glance at the relation between happiness and status consistency (subsection e).

a. Current social rank (S 5.1)

Sixteen investigations in seven countries related happiness to current social rank. Half of these were part of a cross-national survey in 1948 by Buchanan & Cantril (1953). Mexico excepted, all countries involved were industrialized western ones. Most of the investigations assessed social rank by requiring the interviewer to estimate off-hand whether the respondent belonged to the 'upper', 'middle' or 'lower' stratum of the society concerned. It is largely unclear what criteria these interviewers in fact used. Next to 'income', 'education' and 'occupation', they probably considered matters of 'distinction' as apparent in speech, manners and furniture, and in some countries possibly 'ethnic' characteristics. Some American investigations furthermore assessed the matter by means of a sum score of points awarded to 'income', 'education' and 'occupation'. It is not yet established whether happiness related identically to these different measures of social rank in the US.

As in the cases of 'income' and 'education', the correlations are positive though modest in post-war western nations. Correlations higher than $\gamma + .30$ were noted in Italy, Norway and the Netherlands in 1948. In Britain and in the US investigations in the post-war decades found correlations

between +.30 and +.20. Such correlations appeared in Mexico in 1948 as well. Lower but still significant correlations appeared in Australia and W. Germany in 1948, while an investigation in the Netherlands in 1968 found happiness essentially unrelated to social rank.

Several of the American studies specified the relationship. One found happiness to be more closely related to social rank in economically depressed areas than in flourishing ones. Another demonstrated a relatively strong correlation among the socially isolated people. An investigation published after 1975 furthermore showed a stronger correlation among unmarried people than among married ones (Ward, 1979:861), while still another found happiness to be particularly strongly related to social rank among women who had lost their husband at an early age (Bahr & Harvey, 1980:219). Together these findings suggest that rank matters more to relatively vulnerable Americans.

Cross-temporal comparison is difficult in this case. Though there are observations from various decades in Britain, the Netherlands and the US, we can hardly say that correlations were stronger at one time than at another. In the case of the US the indicators of social rank are too different: interviewer estimates in 1948 and sum scores in 1960. Yet it is at least evident that some correlation has remained. Observations in Britain in 1948 and in 1971 were both based on interviewer estimates, but were laid down in incomparable statistics. Here again it is nevertheless beyond doubt that some correlation has remained. The data from the Netherlands are the best comparable. While there was a sizable correlation with interviewer estimated rank in 1948 in that country, a slight negative correlation appeared in 1968 with 'occupational level' (of present job, previous job or husband's job).

Three investigations in the US involved indicators of 'hedonic level'. All found modest positive correlations with social rank as well.

b. Self-assigned social rank (S 5.1)

Two investigations in the US assessed the correspondence between happiness and both 'self-assigned' social rank and social rank as indicated by a sum score of 'income', 'education' and 'occupation'. One was among high school pupils. The happiness of these kids appeared unrelated to the sum score-rank of their father. However, there was a positive correlation between their happiness and the social rank they themselves assigned to their family. This correlation may be due to a tendency of happy children to rank their family higher than

unhappy ones. It can also mean that social rank differences affect happiness through 'soft' mechanisms (e.g. social comparison, self attribution) rather than through 'hard' ones (e.g. health risks, administration of justice) - at least insofar as these youngsters in the US of the 1960's were concerned. Yet there is evidence that the prestige differences at hand do not affect these youngsters very much by 'soft' mechanisms. Though most adult Americans tend to attribute their social rank to personal success or failure, family rank for children is completely 'ascribed', and therefore of less consequence for their self-appreciation. Children are moreover less often confronted with rank differences and are less concerned about this kind of social prestige anyway. See Rosenberg (1979, ch. 5) for more detail. Hence the correlation between happiness and self-assigned status is more likely to be due to a tendency of happy children to rank their family higher than unhappy ones.

The other investigation was among adults in the 1970's. It found happiness equally strongly related to the sum score of social rank as to their subjective estimate of it. Yet once again the phenomena appeared differently related to happiness, the correlation with 'self-assessed rank' being largely independent of 'sum score-rank'.

c. Milieu of origin (S 5.1)

Strangely enough no investigation has yet considered the relation between the happiness of adults and their social milieu of origin. In this area there is only the above mentioned investigation among American high school pupils.

d. Social mobility (S 5.3)

A representative investigation in the Netherlands in 1968 compared the happiness of adults who had reached a higher rank than their father, with those who had fallen lower on the ladder or who had remained on the same level. No differences appeared between either categories. As we have seen, happiness was not related to global social rank anyway at that time in the Netherlands. Recently a non-representative investigation in the US yielded a similar result (McKinley-Runyan, 1980:55). Though it found slightly more happiness among people who had risen socially than among those who had fallen, the differences were not significant. Nor did the ones who had changed rank differ in happiness from the ones that stayed at their father's level.

These findings contradict the common assumption that people who climb the social ladder become more happy as a result. However, we must guard against jumping to the conclusion that upward social mobility has no positive effects on happiness at all. Such effect may still exist, but be counterbalanced by negative ones: such as a loss of contacts with family and friends. (Relevance of such contacts for the happiness of modern western people will be demonstrated in section 6/4.3). It is also possible that the fruits of social success have been largely veiled by a tendency of unhappy people to seek improvement by getting on in the world (McKinley-Runyan, 1980:56). Spuriousness may distort the picture as well. An actually negative effect of upward social mobility may for instance be counterbalanced by the fact that climbers are typically active and healthy people and therefore happier than average. Whatever the case in the western populations at hand, it is evident that things may pan out differently in other times and cultures.

e. Status-consistency (S 5.3)

Some investigators have recognized that there are more 'social ladders' than merely one, and that people may differ in their position on each of these. Only one or two considered the effects of such differences on happiness. In the US this was done by Robinson & Shaver (1973:21), who speculated that people with a high income or a good job in spite of little education would be relatively happy and that unhappiness would prevail among those who were not successful in working life in spite of a good education. They examined several postwar American data sets, but to their surprise they did not find consistent differences. In the Netherlands two investigations found no differences of that kind either. 'Over-achievers' did not appear happier than 'under-achievers', and 'status consistent' persons were not happier than 'inconsistent' ones. Once again it should be pointed out that zero correlations do not necessarily mean that the matter never effects happiness at all.

f. Discussion

Let us focus on the correlations between happiness and current rank as presented sub **a** and **b**. At first sight these findings seem to confirm the common notion that life is better at the top of the social ladder than at the bottom. Yet on second thought the question arises what 'social ladder' is concerned,

and whether a thing like 'the' social ladder actually exists.

The indicators of social rank involved here reflect primarily differences in 'income' and 'social prestige'. Yet they were meant to cover broader social differences and they probably do. In fact they can concern all the differences that have been associated with the term 'social class', i.e.: differences in 'economic position', differences in 'political power', differences in 'lifestyle' and differences with respect to the 'kind of people' one feels to belong to. 'Birth' and 'ethnicity' are sometimes associated with social class as well. Unfortunately the extent to which these indicators actually reflect such differences remains undefined. Thus it is hard to interpret their correlation with happiness.

A further complication is that the notion of 'social rank' presupposes that these various inequalities can be reduced to one common denominator ('the' social ladder) and that citizens of a nation can thus be classified meaningfully in a few categories such as 'upper', 'middle' and 'lower'. The problem with this assumption is that it is not applicable in all countries. Paralleling differences do indeed exist in some, for instance in England, where the traditional elite still has considerable political and economic power, where lifestyles differ widely and where class consciousness is relatively strong. However, in other countries the pattern of inequality is more complex. In the US for instance, relatively independent status hierarchies exist, based on wealth, education, power and color. Global social rank ratings are then not very meaningful and very liable to coding error. Such ratings can at best identify the people who are high or low on all status criteria involved.

Another thing is that social rank differences do not involve the same criteria everywhere. In some countries it is primarily a matter of 'birth' (for example: ethnicity or caste), in some rather a matter of 'lifestyle' (speech, dressing, conspicuousness of consumption) and in some a matter of political or economic 'achievement'. Status criteria being different, the relationship with happiness is obviously not the same everywhere. With these problems in mind I will now consider the usual questions.

Artefacts? As in the case of 'income', 'education' and 'occupational prestige', the correlations can be inflated slightly by desirability bias. Spurious factors may be involved as well. No controls having been performed nothing can be said for certain.

Does happiness affect social rank? In the earlier discussions on 'income', 'education' and 'occupational prestige' I pointed out that the positive correlations

could be partly due to effects of happiness. A positive appreciation of life fostering 'pluck', 'ability' and 'energy', happy people would have a better chance of improving themselves, at least in open societies. The positive correlation between happiness and global social rank can be explained in the same vein. In this case we do have an empirical check. As we have seen sub d and e, happiness has been related to success in two reasonably open societies: the Netherlands and the US. Climbers did not appear particularly happy and neither did sinkers appear relatively unhappy. This explanation can therefore be rejected; at least insofar as these contemporary western nations are concerned.

How could social rank affect happiness? Many of the effects probably involved here have already been noted in the earlier discussions on 'income', 'education' and 'occupational status', these variables being part of the global differences at hand. If the investigations had been checked for the mutual effect of these variables in the correlation, we could have formed some opinion about the significance of the further differences that may be involved. Unfortunately no such check has been performed as yet. Hence we can only speculate about the rank characteristics that matter. Whatever they are, they are unlikely to be identical in all countries at all times for all people; rank criteria being different across time and place and their consequences highly variable.

Still we can claim for sure that generally two types of effects will be involved: 'hard' effects and 'soft' ones. The 'hard' effects are usually referred to as 'life-chances'. They involve differences in material living conditions, legal protection, social support and the like. These differences can affect the appreciation of life both directly and indirectly. Indirect effects can e.g. be mediated by 'health' and 'mental effectiveness'; lower class people suffer typically more physical illness and mental disorders in western nations. See e.g. Hollingshead & Redlich (1965).

The 'soft' effects are sometimes referred to as 'relative deprivation'. They involve not only an awareness of being worse off than the others, but also the perception that these differences are unjustified. 'Working class consciousness' in the Marxist sense is hence likely to foster unhappiness. This is not the whole story, however. The term 'relative deprivation' is also associated with the discontent of categories that are not bad off objectively, but reach out for more. Various effects of this kind can be involved: e.g. the cherishing of unrealistic aspirations among the highly educated (remember the discussion in 6/2.5) or social pressure for conspicuous consumption among the rich.

Why not equally strong in all countries? The cross-national investigation in 1948 showed some cross-national differences, correlations being more pronounced in Italy, Norway and the Netherlands at that time than in Australia and West-Germany. An explanation is difficult to offer on the basis of the data at hand. It is not only unclear what rank criteria are involved, but these criteria are probably not identical in the countries concerned anyway.

Why decreased in the Netherlands? The observed decrease in the correlation between happiness and social rank in the Netherlands between 1948 and 1968 is probably part of a wider phenomenon. Remember that the correlation with 'education' also decreased in the Netherlands during that period and that a similar development took place in Canada between 1968 and 1978. Remember also that the correlation between happiness and 'income' fell in both W.Germany between 1954 and 1976 and in Canada between 1968 and 1978. Together these stray observations suggest that there is some truth in sociological theories about the fading of traditional class differences in modern western societies. It has been argued that political and economic power became less closely linked with the private ownership of production means; e.g. because managers gained influence at the cost of shareholders and state enterprise became more common. Income differences would have leveled off as well; the pain of inequality would at least have been softened by economic affluence. Mass-media and mass-production would further have effaced the lifestyle differences. In particular it is likely to have enhanced the 'embourgeoisement' of the traditional working class. All this would then result in a crumbling away of subjective 'class consciousness'. See among others Lipset (1964), Galbraith (1969) and Aron (1956). These claims have raised much discussion and it appears that they do not apply equally well in all western nations (See e.g. Bottomore, 1971). Yet they seem to apply reasonably well in the case of the Netherlands. At any rate Dutch society became more 'open'. During the last decades: intergenerational occupational mobility increased considerably between 1954 and 1977 (Ganzeboom & De Graaf, 1983) and marriage with a partner of a different education became more common between 1959 and 1977 (Sixma & Ultee, 1983). Though rank differences are still recognized, their impact on the appreciation of life has apparently melted away.

6/3 HAPPINESS AND WORK

Any human society involves a division of work; in modern western societies in particular this division has been pushed very far. As a result life is not the same for people in one job as in another. The work determines one's living conditions to some extent (income, social milieu, physical risks, etc.) and may color the way in which one develops physically (health) and psychologically (e.g. self-respect, fate control belief). Therefore it is probably not without consequences for the appreciation of life. Several investigations tried to trace such relationships empirically: three themes can be distinguished.

Firstly, there are differences in involvement in *paid work*; differences between employment and unemployment and differences between full-time and part-time employment. These differences are particularly sharp in the modern industrialized world, where the employment/non-employment difference coincides with a distinction between public and private spheres of life. Though conditions in the private sphere are typically considered to be the most essential to happiness in modern nations, gainful employment is still considered a matter of great importance as well. Unemployment in particular is believed to be very detrimental to happiness. In section 6/3.1 I will consider these claims in more detail on the basis of various investigations in western nations.

Secondly, there are great differences in the *nature of work tasks*, among other things in the 'variety' they provide, in the 'skill' they require, in the 'social contacts' they involve and in the degree to which they seem 'purposeful'. These differences can obviously affect happiness as well. It is generally believed that monotonous and isolated work makes for unhappiness. Some cross-cultural findings on this matter will be reported in section 6/3.2.

Finally there are various *unpaid tasks*, for instance in the family and in various voluntary organizations. The relationship between happiness and some family tasks will be discussed in the sections 6/3.1c (full-time household work) and 6/4.2 (parental tasks). In section 6/3.3 I will focus on the relationship between happiness and involvement in voluntary organizations.

6/3.1 HAVING A JOB OR NOT (W 2.1)

Many social scientists believe that working is essential to happiness. Brock

(1965:84) writes for example that "...hard work is one of the most important factors in making a man happy ...". Similarly Armstrong (1973:472/3) remarks that "... The way to happiness is not to be found in 'creative leisure', but rather in purposeful work of positive value to society at large ...". Working is believed to contribute to happiness in several ways. Apart from being a source of 'income' and 'social respect', it is claimed to bring 'rewarding contacts', enhance the 'sense of meaningfulness' and 'activate' the organism, thus preventing mental and physical atrophy. Consequently unemployment is generally seen as detrimental to happiness. This view has been dominant since the famous study of Jahoda et al. (1933) among unemployed people in Marienthal during the Great Depression. Though questioned by a few utopists (see for instance Kreykamp, 1975:20/25), it has not been subjected to systematic empirical tests as yet.

These views are firmly rooted in the public mind in western nations. Work is seen as an important source of one's personal happiness, though rarely as the most important one. This has been observed in Britain in 1975 (Hall, 1976:49), in Finland in 1966 (Haavio-Mannila, 1971:592) and in the US in 1957 (Gurin et al., 1960:31). Consequently most people say they would continue working, even if there were no financial need to do (Demonstrated in W.Germany in the 1970's by Noelle-Neuman, 1977:239 and in the US by Michalos, 1982:53).

Though it has not yet been established systematically that employment actually influences happiness, there are several investigations that have touched on the subject. All these investigations were carried out in western nations. The results suggest that gainful employment has a different effect on different categories of people: it makes a difference whether one is a 'chief wage earner', an 'old age pensioner' or a 'housewife'. I will therefore present the findings for each category separately.

a. Working and unemployment among chief wage earners

An investigation in the US in 1963 focused on chief wage earners. Unemployed chief wage earners appeared less happy than employed ones. The unemployed were both less satisfied with their life-as-a-whole and reported a lower hedonic level. These differences appeared among males as well as among females.

The same investigation also monitored the effect of losing one's job on hedonic level longitudinally. Chief wage earners who had lost their job during

the last six months appeared to have become less cheerful. On the other hand formerly unemployed ones who had found a job during that period did not show a comparable upswing of mood.

Three investigations published after 1975 documented that the relation between happiness and gainful employment is rather conditional. A British follow-up study among employees of a steelshop that closed down, demonstrated that things were different among the ones who were eager to work and the ones who were not. Though the subjects who were still unemployed six months later were less happy on average than their former colleagues who had found a new job, a closer look showed that this difference was largely due to the dissatisfaction of the unemployed who really wanted to work and who had actually tried to find another job. The unemployed who were not very work-minded were in fact equally happy as the newly employed. Work orientation being rather low among the youngest and the eldest respondents, happiness appeared related to employment-status in the age category of 30 to 55 years only (Warr, 1978:116/9). In the US the effect of unemployment on happiness was shown to depend largely on 'income'. The correlation was more pronounced among the poor than among the rich (Campbell, 1981:67). In the Netherlands in 1981 this was hardly the case, however. The difference in happiness between employed and unemployed people appeared also independent of 'education' and 'social contacts' in that country. 'Mental effectiveness' explained more of the variance; it was responsible for 10 percent of the variance in happiness between working males and males discharged as medically unfit (Sikkel & Jansen, 1984:91/96).

In the US, unemployment of the male chief wage earner was shown to be related to the happiness of his spouse. The relationship was less strong, however.

Investigations in the US allow a comparison through time. Between 1957 and 1978 the relationship persisted. Even when 'income' was checked out, no temporal differences appeared (Campbell, 1981:67).

Discussion

At first sight these findings provide modest support for the view that unemployment is detrimental to happiness, at least insofar as the contemporary US is concerned. However, the correlations can be due to other effects as well. Let's again consider the alternative explanations.

Artefacts? As in the cases of 'income', 'education' and 'occupational prestige' it is possible that the correlations are due to desirability bias, unemployed

chief wage earners being in a better position to admit to unhappiness than working ones. Once more it is hard to estimate the actual size of this effect, but if it exists at all, it is unlikely to be large.

The likelihood of spuriousness is once more greater. Several factors that have been mentioned in the earlier discussion on 'income' (section 6/2.4) may be involved, among other things 'health', 'mental effectiveness', 'social ability' and 'activity level'. The case of mental effectiveness may illustrate this point. Not everyone is equally able to cope with the problems of life and the ones who are least able to do so are obviously more likely to become unemployed. This was for instance demonstrated by Vaillant (1980:3) who found more unemployment among intellectuals who were relatively 'immature' as students. Mental effectiveness is typically conducive to happiness. (To be argued in section 7/1.2c). Thus the category of the unemployed may be less happy on average because of an overrepresentation of problematic people rather than as a result of detrimental effects of unemployment. Above we have seen that mental effectiveness explains part of the difference observed in the Netherlands in 1981. The effects of 'physical health', 'social ability' and 'activity level' have not been checked as yet. It is also possible that 'minority status' works as an intervening variable; minorities typically being both less happy and less likely to find a job. This possibility has not been checked either.

For the time being it is thus doubtful whether happiness of chief wage earners is related to their employment status at all in the western nations at hand. Nevertheless I will take a look at the possible mechanisms behind a possibly non-spurious correlation.

How could happiness affect employment status? As in the case of 'income' and 'education' the correlations could be due to the effects of happiness. Unhappiness could for instance lead to 'ill health', 'apathy' and to 'impairment of social contacts' and could thus add to the chances of getting the sack or staying unemployed. The size of such effects is obviously dependent on selectivity on the labor market and hence likely to be variable through time.

The earlier investigation among chief wage earners in the US in 1963 would not suggest that this effect was very pronounced. Unemployed respondents who reported high hedonic level at the first interview were not more likely to have found a job six months later than their fellows in mis-fortune who were in low mood at the first interview.

How could unemployment affect happiness? Insofar as unemployment

influences the happiness of chief wage earners it does so partly by its financial consequences. In the US at least, the correlations drop markedly when checked for 'income', especially in the low income brackets. Of course the possibility remains that employment has non-financial pay-off as well. Remember the above suggestions about its benefits with respect to 'prestige', 'contact', 'meaning' and 'activation'. Yet the data leave no doubt that things work differently for different people. Not everybody falls prey to unhappiness when losing his job. In England that happened only to workers who badly wanted to work. Below we will see that gainful employment is largely irrelevant to elderly people, to housewives and to students. Thus it seems that the benefits of employment are less general than often suggested. Though it is probably true that all people need 'contacts', 'recognition', 'meaning' and 'structured tasks', the domain of gainful work is evidently not the sole supplier of such gratifications in western society, and probably not even an indispensable one.

Positive effects of employment can be counterbalanced by negative ones. Gainful work involves considerable drawbacks; in an industrialized society e.g. 'health risks', 'limitations of freedom', 'stress' and 'alienation'. There is a lot of literature about the sufferings of work: of factory-work in particular. See e.g. Braverman's (1974) charge against the "degradation of work in the twentieth century" and Kumar's (1978) claim that bureaucracy has even galled the work of professionals.

The balance of effects of employment is obviously variable across time and culture. Once more it is stressed that the few data at hand here concern western nations in the post war decades. At present the balance may be different in the less prosperous parts of the world. During the Great Depression things may have been different in the western world as well. The financial consequences of unemployment were at any rate greater at that time, whereas the so-called 'Protestant Ethic' was probably held in greater respect. Though there are no data on happiness from these days, there are at least indications that unemployment caused more 'family stress' (Thomas, et. al., 1980) and more 'mental problems' (Jahoda, 1979).

b. Retirement (R 3)

Several studies in industrialized nations compared the happiness of retired people with the happiness of working ones. The broadest study was a cross-national investigation in 1948. This investigation showed retired people

to be somewhat less happy in Australia, Britain, France, the Netherlands and Western Germany. In Italy and Norway the retired appeared to be as happy as average. Remember that happiness was slightly positively related to 'age' in these countries at that time. In the US two investigations yielded different results. One in 1948 found no difference in a random sample of the entire US, whereas another in 1962 found retired persons in four small communities in Illinois to be slightly less happy in average.

Three investigations focused on senior citizens exclusively: one in Japan and two in the US. All found retired people somewhat less happy than people of the same age who were still working. One of the American studies was a longitudinal one; it considered several variables that may intervene in the relationship. People who were unhappy before retirement appeared to become happier afterwards. The same was true for people who retired voluntarily rather than compulsorily. On the other hand retirement was followed by a decrease in happiness among those who were in good health but who could not manage to keep busy.

An investigation among retired university professors in the US inspected the relationship between happiness and 'years of retirement'. It found a U-shaped curve: first a gradual decline in happiness and after four years a rise.

All these studies on retirement used indicators of 'overall happiness'. None assessed the relationship between retirement and 'hedonic level' and neither did any relate retired status to 'contentment'.

Discussion.

Let us try to take a look behind these correlates: are we dealing with a tendency of happy people to continue working or does gainful employment add to the appreciation of life? Once more I begin with the question of whether we are dealing with a statistical artefact or not.

Artefacts? This time the findings seem more reliable. Desirability bias is less likely to play a role here, retirement of elderly people being more accepted than unemployment of younger chief wage earners.

The chance that the relationships are spurious is smaller as well. Though not always, retirement is at least very often regulated by administrative rules, applied irrespective of the person's 'health', 'ability' or 'energy'. The difference between the happiness of retired people and the average happiness of people in the work force could possibly be due to an effect of 'age'. However,

we have seen in section 6/2.1 that happiness is largely unrelated to age in the nations concerned.

Could happiness influence the age of retirement? In view of the fact that the age of retirement is generally dictated by administrative rules it is improbable that the slight differences are due to any tendency on the part of unhappy people to stop working earlier. Even if such a tendency did exist, it would not account for the lower happiness of retired people. As we have seen, Americans who were relatively unhappy when working, tended to become happier when they stopped.

How could retirement affect happiness? The longitudinal investigation leaves no doubt that retirement does influence happiness; though its effect is not always identical for everybody.

Retirement can obviously affect happiness in several ways. The effect of reduced 'income' is probably less pronounced here than in the case of younger chief wage earners. Old age pensions are generally higher than unemployment pay and retired persons usually have fewer mouths to feed. Even so, income differences may be partly responsible for the small differences in happiness between working and retired people. Next to financial losses, retirement obviously involves losses in 'social contacts', 'challenges' and 'responsibilities'. On the other hand retirement involves considerable gains as well: more 'rest', more 'freedom' and more 'opportunity to do the things one likes'.

Apparently the balance is not the same for everybody. People who disliked their work are typically glad to be rid of it. Gerontological studies on 'morale' after retirement have suggested that much depends on whether or not one has alternative tasks in the family or in voluntary organizations. See among others George and Maddox (1977).

Another thing is that retirement demands a considerable reorientation, sometimes depicted as a 'lifecrisis'. The problems involved can temporarily lower happiness. As we have seen this kind of temporary decrease has been demonstrated among retired university professors in the US. It is not impossible that this transitory effect is largely responsible for the small differences that have been found.

c. **Working women vs. full-time housewives (W 2.1)**

During the last few decades many social critics in western nations bemoaned

the lot of full-time housewives, who are said to be denied the pleasures of gainful work outside the house. Investigations by Hoffman & Nye (1974: 223) and by Ferree (1976) seemed to support these lamentations empirically, American housewives appearing to be comparatively dissatisfied with their lives. However, the indicators of happiness these investigators used do not meet the demands I outlined in chapter 4. Moreover their findings were based on rather specific samples. As we will see more sophisticated studies yielded different results.

Findings

Three acceptable investigations compared the happiness of married working women with the happiness of married full-time housewives. One of these was performed in Finland and two in the US. One of the American studies found slightly more happiness among working women. It was based on an accidental sample. The other two investigations were based on representative samples, and found no difference. Between 1971 and 1976 six more representative studies were performed in the US. They found no differences either (Wright, 1978).

The various investigations involved three specification variables: 'education', 'social rank' and 'motivation to work'. The effect of *education* was considered in several of the American studies. Contrary to expectations, employment appeared no more beneficial for highly educated women than for poorly educated ones. Though in 1971 married college-educated working women were indeed slightly happier than non-working ones, the difference disappeared in an identical investigation in 1978 (Campbell, 1981:138). The Finnish study assessed the effect of *social rank*. Though working women were on average as happy as fulltime housewives in that country, the situation was different for women with husbands of high social status compared with those married to men of low social status. The former were slightly less happy than housewives of the same social rank and the latter slightly more happy. No such difference appeared in the US (Wright, 1978:305). *Motivation to work* appeared to differentiate better. As in the case of chief wage earners and retired people, happiness appeared positively related to working among wives who wanted a job and negatively among the ones who preferred to stay at home (Demonstrated by Rodgers, 1977). This finding should be acknowledged by those who maintain that housewives should be pressed to take a job for their own good.

In the US the matter was investigated at different points in time. Between 1957 and 1978 no change occurred, the just mentioned case of college

educated women excepted. (See Campbell, 1981:138). This finding is all the more noteworthy because the women's movement grew up during this period and because the number of employed married women increased considerably.

These investigations involved indicators of 'overall happiness' and 'hedonic level'. The results are once more similar. None of these studies considered 'contentment'.

Discussion

The fact that happiness is not statistically linked to gainful employment among married women can again not be taken as proof that these matters are causally unrelated. Possible beneficial effects of outdoor employment could be veiled by statistical distortions and selection. It is not impossible either that negative effects cancel out otherwise positive ones. Let's consider these possibilities in more detail.

Artefacts? The chance that we are dealing with a statistical artefact is again small. Desirability bias can hardly be held responsible for the results. There may be a tendency to keep up the image of a 'happy homemaker', but there is little reason to expect this tendency to be stronger than the wish to appear as a successful example of female emancipation. If they exist at all, these social desirability effects are likely to manifest themselves more pronouncedly in the higher social ranks than in the lower ones. They are also likely to be stronger in recent years than in the years preceding the birth of the women's movement. As observed above, no such rank and time differences appear. Nor does the fact that hedonic level and overall happiness relate similarly to the work-status of married women, add to the plausibility of desirability bias.

It is more likely that the absence of statistical differences is due to spuriousness. An actually positive effect of gainful employment could for instance be veiled by a negative effect of 'marital dissatisfaction'. Women who are dissatisfied with their marriage could be more apt to seek a job outside the house. As marital dissatisfaction tends to go together with dissatisfaction with life-as-a-whole (to be demonstrated in the sections 6/4.1b and 7/6.2a) unhappy women could be overrepresented in the category of working wives. However, several investigations in the US showed married women who work to be no less satisfied with their marriage than full-time housewives (Wright, 1978:309). Still one could imagine that characteristics of the husband distort the picture: e.g. 'low income of the partner' or 'unemployment'. We have already seen that these conditions tend to affect the happiness of

married women negatively (in respectively the sections 6/2.4 and 6/3.1a) and they are also liable to add to the chance that she starts or continues working. No data are available to check this possibility.

Could happiness affect the tendency to seek outdoor work? As in earlier cases we can assume that joy in living adds to one's chances of engagement in gainful work, because of its positive effects on 'health', 'activity level' and 'sociability'. However, discontent may push one on the labor-market as well. At the present time, outdoor employment is generally cherished as a remedy for unhappiness in housewives and as such it is probably often put into practice.

How could outdoor employment affect the happiness of married women? Obviously the negative and positive effects of work touched on in the discussion on chief wage earners apply to married women as well. Yet there are some differences that must be taken into account: Firstly, women generally had less attractive jobs in the western nations at the time of these investigations; especially married women with children (Coser & Rokoff, 1971). Typically women earned less than men; even when male and female workers of the same age, education, experience and job-tenure are compared (Treiman & Terel, 1975 on the basis of data from the US in 1967). The rewards of working are thus less pronounced for women. Secondly, we must take into account that working outside the house is mostly not accompanied by a comparable reduction of the tasks within it. (Demonstrated in the US by among others Myrdal & Klein, 1966:35; and Sweet 1973:18). Working mothers in particular often get overburdened. It is possible that these complications neutralize an otherwise positive effect of employment among married women. The effect of these variables not having been checked as yet, we cannot say anything for sure. Yet the findings mentioned above on employment and retirement among males do not suggest that such checks will change the picture drastically.

d. Part-time employment (W 2.1)

Recently, several authors praised the benefits of part-time employment. Part-time work, it is claimed, encourages a more relaxed and hence more 'healthy pace of life' and results in more 'varied life-experiences'. These advantages are said to be more rewarding in the long run than the higher income and career chances provided by full-time work; at least for some categories on the

labor-market (among others Teriet, 1978:32). These claims have not been tested systematically as yet.

Insofar as adults are concerned, the matter has been considered among *married females* in the US only. One of the above mentioned investigations compared full-time housewives with housewives in part-time employment. It found no differences. Evidently all the above mentioned complications apply here as well.

Part-time working on the part of *schoolchildren* and *students* has been praised as well. It is said to confront them with 'real life' and to contribute to their 'sense of efficacy' and 'social responsibility'. Cole (1980) expressed her doubts about these claims; especially when the work takes more than a dozen hours weekly. Two studies in the US support her hunch that the positive consequences hardly outweigh the negative ones; at least insofar as current happiness is concerned. A prewar investigation among female college students did not show any difference in overall happiness between students employed part-time and non-employed ones. An investigation among high school pupils in New York State in 1960 also found no differences; either in overall happiness or in hedonic level. Contrary to Cole's suggestion, happiness levels were also similar among pupils who worked less than 15 hours a week and youngsters who worked more. Again it is unclear to what extent the results are distorted by spuriousness and to what extent they are due to effects of happiness on the willingness to engage in part-time work.

6/3.2 OCCUPATION (W 2.2)

It is not only believed that 'having work' adds to happiness, but also that some kinds of work contribute more to it than others. Though it is generally agreed that there are major differences in 'quality' of work, there is a difference in opinion as to what kinds of work are best. Some authors stress 'variety' and 'intellectual challenges', others praise 'handicraft', 'security' and 'routine'. In spite of these disagreements among experts, the general public hold definite notions about the relative happiness of people in different occupations. In Britain in 1971 a clear pattern emerged. 'Business executives' were regarded as most happy at that time, closely followed by 'professional people'. Then came respectively 'office workers', 'skilled workers', 'small businessmen' and 'unskilled workers'. 'Old age pensioners' were seen as the least happy. Remarkably, people did not attribute a different level of happiness to the occupational category they themselves belonged to than others

did (Hall, 1973:98). As we will see this rating accurately reflected the actual differences in happiness in Britain at that time. Only the old age pensioners were in fact not that bad off in Britain.

Differences in happiness between occupations have been considered in two cross-national investigations: one in 1948 by Buchanan & Cantril (1953) and one in 1960 by Cantril (1965) alone. Both studies covered several western and non-western nations. The matter has also been studied separately in Britain and the US. All investigations used very global classifications, the most detailed distinguishing only eight occupational categories. Unfortunately the classifications used are not wholly identical. Comparison is therefore difficult.

Findings.

All over the world the following hierarchy appeared:

- professionals, managers;
- clerical workers;
- skilled manual workers;
- students, retired persons, housewives, farmers (in western nations);
- unskilled workers, peasants (in underdeveloped nations).

Professionals emerged as the most happy, unskilled workers as the least. Though this hierarchy turned up in all countries, the differences in happiness were not as great everywhere. Differences were greatest in Western Europe: particularly in Britain, France, Italy and Norway; at least in 1948. A study in Britain in 1971 found relatively sizable differences as well. The differences were least pronounced in Australia, the US, two socialistic countries (Poland and Yugoslavia) and two developing nations (India and Mexico). Apart from the apparent similarities in the happiness hierarchies some minor differences appeared. In particular the relative happiness of those who work on the land was not identical everywhere. In western nations farmers appeared somewhat happier than unskilled workers, while in developing countries peasants were the least happy. Not all the investigators distinguished sufficiently between 'farm-owners' and 'farm-workers' and no one differentiated big farmers' from 'small farmers' in western countries, or 'landlords' from 'peasants' in developing nations.

Comparison through time is only possible for the US. No change seems to

have occurred there between 1960 and 1971. The global hierarchy has in any case remained unchanged. Probably things are different for Blacks and Whites. (Remember section 6/2.3d.).

After 1975 two investigations examined whether 'self-employed' people are happier or not. In the US no difference appeared (Bamundo & Kopelman, 1980:112). In W. Germany self-employed people emerged slightly less happy on average (Noelle-Neuman, 1977:257).

All these investigations used indicators of 'overall happiness'. As yet none compared 'hedonic level' or 'contentment' of people in different occupations.

Discussion

The differences in happiness between occupational categories are clear and consistent. They correspond with differences in other indicators of well-being; among other things with differences in mortality rates (see e.g. Fletcher & Payne, 1980:21). Yet the results are difficult to interpret. Not only because causality can work in two ways, but also because it is possible that the correlations are entirely spurious.

Artefacts? If any forms of bias are involved in these investigations, they must be similar to those mentioned in the earlier discussions on 'income' and 'education'. Hence they are likely to have been modest at best. The chance that the correlations are due to spuriousness is again greater. The differences in happiness between the occupational categories concerned here are evidently tied up with differences in 'income', 'education' and 'social prestige'. The occupational classification at hand corresponds in fact to the typical prestige ladder. It is worth noting in this context that the occupational prestige hierarchy is essentially similar in all contemporary societies and that the requirements of education and the consequences for income of the various occupations are strikingly similar as well (Treiman, 1977:78/128). The chance of spuriousness is all the more realistic because all investigations involved were performed in countries where these variables were firmly related to happiness at that time. Unfortunately no investigator has checked for the mutual effects of income, education and prestige. It is dubious whether any variance would remain after such checks. If it did, then the hierarchy could appear different and not universal anymore.

Let's nevertheless suppose for a moment that at least a part of this pattern remained. There are again two explanations: firstly that differences in appre-

ciation of life influence the likelihood of getting one job or another and, secondly, that not all jobs are as satisfying in the long run.

How could happiness affect job selection? The overrepresentation of happy people in managerial and intellectual occupations is unlikely to be due to the direct effects of happiness. A positive appreciation of life does not qualify one for such occupations nor are there reasons for supposing that such occupations are more attractive for happy people. It would seem more probable that indirect effects are involved: in particular the effects that have already been mentioned in the discussion on 'income'. Remember that cheerfulness facilitates 'social contact'. (To be demonstrated in section 6/4.1d). Further it enhances both 'health' and 'activity'. (To be shown in respectively sections 7/1.1 and 7/1.4). As we will see, happiness is also likely to foster the notion that one is in 'control of one's fate and to bolster 'self respect'. (Respectively sections 7/2.1 and 7/6.1b). Though obviously of value in any occupation, these characteristics seem to be particularly required for success in managerial jobs. Yet it is also evident that this explanation can at best account for part of the differences. It is e.g. of little help in accounting for the differences between skilled and unskilled labor. Moreover we have seen that social climbers were not particularly happy people. (Section 6/2.7d).

How could occupation affect happiness? In the previous discussion on 'having work' I already mentioned various potential assets and liabilities of being employed. Obviously these are not evenly distributed among the occupations concerned here. Yet it is hard to establish which merits and demerits are most characteristic for what kind of occupational categories. (Not including 'income' and 'prestige', these benefits being generally highest at the top of the hierarchy). For example it is not certain that white-collar jobs provide more 'meaning' on average than blue-collar ones, nor that they involve more 'variety' and 'freedom'. I think we'll never know. The occupational categories involved are in fact too broad to allow sensible generalizations. Moreover, the pros and cons of the various occupations are likely to be highly variable across time, culture and work-context, not to mention their dependence on various personal characteristics. A glance at the literature on job satisfaction may illustrate this point: most attempts to draw a profile of typically rewarding jobs break down on the multitude of variables involved.

6/3.3 VOLUNTARY WORK (S 4.2)

Paid employment is not the only form of work; all societies provide various unpaid tasks as well e.g. in the context of family and religion. The distinction between 'gainful' and 'voluntary' activity is sharpest in the modern western world; in particular where activities in clubs, political parties and community organizations are concerned.

Like paid work, voluntary work is believed to contribute to happiness. The 'Community Development Movement' claims it to forestall loneliness and alienation and a superior way of spending one's leisure time. Several investigations in western nations showed indeed that happy people participate more in voluntary organizations than unhappy ones. They found happiness related to both 'membership' of voluntary organizations and to 'activity' therein.

a. **Membership**

Four American investigations found people who were members of one or more voluntary organizations to be happier than those who were not; members reporting both more 'overall happiness' and higher 'hedonic level'. One of these investigations (a general population survey) found the relationship between overall happiness and organizational membership to be more pronounced among females than among males and more pronounced at the lower end of the social ladder than at the top. No such differences appeared in correlations with hedonic level.

Two of these investigations studied the matter longitudinally. Both dealt with aged people and assessed changes in membership during the past few years. They found withdrawal from voluntary organizations to go together with low overall happiness and low hedonic level. The correspondence appeared most pronounced among 'deprived' people; i.e. among the compulsorily retired, the widowed and/or the physically disabled. The withdrawal of these people was probably involuntary in most cases. Unfortunately none of these investigations assessed happiness at the time before the change took place. Hence they do not demonstrate causality.

b. Activity

Ten further studies related happiness to activity in voluntary associations, two in the Netherlands and eight in the US. All found the most active members to be the happiest. Again these people appeared to report more 'overall happiness' as well as higher 'hedonic level'. Specification for 'age' and 'gender' did not yield consistent differences. No differences appeared either in a specification for 'mental effectiveness'. There are indications that the relation was stronger among the unmarried.

Next to these synchronic investigations there is a longitudinal one; again among aged people in the US. The elderly who had reduced their attendance at meetings during the last four years appeared relatively unhappy; especially the very old. Again only 'social participation was followed longitudinally, not happiness. Bradburn (1969:137) followed both happiness and organizational activity over a nine-months period. Unfortunately he includes his observations on changes in organizational activity in a social participation index', which also covers changes in contact with friends and relatives. The hedonic level of people who had increased participation appeared to have risen more than average, while the hedonic level of the ones who decreased participation turned out to have dropped relatively. His report is unclear as to whether changes in organizational activity alone corresponded with changes in hedonic level as well.

It is not as yet established to what extent these findings reflect effects of participation in voluntary organizations as such, or benefits that are specific for special kinds of organizations. For example it is not clear whether happiness is equally strongly related to participation in leisure clubs as to participation in political organizations. Below we will see that happiness is at any rate strongly related to participation in sports clubs, while happiness is currently less strongly related to church attendance. (Shown in respectively the sections 6/3a and 7/5.2b).

c. Discussion

Again we must guard against identifying correlates with causes. Therefore I will once more take a look at the various effects that could possibly be responsible for the statistical relationships that appear.

Artefacts? The chance that the correlations are due to desirability bias is

small. Though recognized by the general public as a source of happiness, organizational participation is generally not seen as a very important one (Hall, 1976:49, on the basis of British data). Hence there is little reason for expecting that the most active people are more apt to overstate their happiness than the least active ones.

Once more the chance of spuriousness is greater. Brim (1974:139) suggested that the differences may be largely due to the fact that voluntary organizations tend to attract people of high 'self-esteem', low 'anomy' and low 'anxiety'. Each of these characteristics is typically more frequent among happy people. (See respectively section 7/6.1, 7/6.3 in this volume and section A 2.2.2 in the Databook). As in the case of 'income', the correlations can also be due to differences in 'health', 'general mental effectiveness', 'social ability' and 'energy'. Feeling to be 'in control' of one's fate can be responsible for spurious correlation as well. It has at least been shown to add to the chance that one joins political organizations (Phares, 1976:94/99) and in section 7/2.1 we will see that it is also likely to add to happiness.

As yet only one of these variables has been checked. As we have seen, the relationship between happiness and organizational activity remained after specification for 'mental health'. The study that distinguished between 'deprived' and 'non-deprived' aged people suggests that 'physical health' cannot wholly explain the correlation with organizational membership either. Yet the most evident candidates have not been examined up till now. For the time being therefore, it is unclear to what extent these correlates reflect a real relationship.

Could happiness affect participation in voluntary organizations? If not entirely spurious, the correlation may once more be due to effects of happiness. Again we can expect that a positive appreciation of life works positively, because of its effects on 'health' and 'activity level'. (To be demonstrated in the sections 7/1.1 and 7/1.4 respectively). The fact that happy people are generally more 'attractive' to others (to be shown on p. 240) may facilitate their involvement in voluntary organizations as well. It is moreover probable that happiness exerts effects by means of several other variables that figured in the above discussion on spuriousness. Further on we will see that there are indications that a positive appreciation of life stimulates 'concern for social and political problems' (section 7/4); as such it could also add to the likelihood of joining political organizations. There are also indications that happy people are more apt to seek 'amusement' (to be discussed in section 7/5.1); as a result they may join leisure clubs more often. On the other hand it is not

improbable that political organizations sometimes attract relatively discontented persons. There are also reasons for assuming that religious organizations sometimes recruit among the unhappy as well. (To be discussed in section 7/5.2a). Once again, these speculations must stay unverified.

How could participation in voluntary organizations affect happiness? Many of the possible effects involved here have already been mentioned in the earlier discussion on the costs and rewards of 'paid work'. Unpaid work may bring 'respect', 'challenges' and 'meaning' as well. Though not beneficial financially, its strains on 'freedom', 'health' and 'energy' are generally less severe. Presumably involvement in voluntary organizations is more rewarding where 'social contacts' are concerned than most paid jobs. The benefits of contacts will be discussed in more detail in the next section. Here it suffices to note that their effect is probably responsible for the fact that the correlations were strongest among the socially most isolated people.

6/4 HAPPINESS AND INTIMATE TIES

Next to the previously discussed differences in socio-economic conditions there are differences in the realm of intimate networks: differences in 'access' to intimate circles and differences in the 'quality' of the ties. It is generally believed that such differences have great repercussions on the appreciation of life. In western nations they are in fact as frequently mentioned as 'income'. This was established in Britain in 1975 by Hall (1976:49); in Finland in 1965 by Haavio Mannila (1971:593) and in the US in 1957 by Gurin et al. (1960:31/2).

Many investigators inspected to what extent happiness is actually related to presence and quality of intimate ties. Strong statistical links appeared in several western nations. Unfortunately this matter has been given hardly any attention as yet in non-western nations. The investigations covered three kinds of intimate ties. Most focused on *marital relationships*, especially on differences in happiness between married and unmarried people. These findings will be discussed in section 6/4.1. Next several investigations related happiness to ties with *children*. Most of these focused on the presence or absence of offspring; a few also touched on the quality of contact with children. We will meet with the results in section 6/4.2. Finally quite a

lot of studies looked into the relationship between happiness and contacts with *family and friends*. Their results will be summarized in section 6/4.3.

It will appear that the relationship with one's spouse is generally the most crucial for happiness. Relations with family and friends count somewhat less, while presence or absence of children hardly affects happiness at all.

6/4.1 MARRIAGE (M 1, M 2)

More than twenty investigations compared the happiness of people of various marital statuses. For the greater part these studies were performed in western countries, particularly in the US. Only three non-western investigations dealt with this matter. Seven investigations related the happiness of married people to various characteristics of the bond; one Finnish excepted, all in the US.

a. **Having a life-partner or not (M 1.1)**

People who share a household with a steady partner appeared on the whole to be happier than those who do not. This was at least so in several western nations. As we will see below the differences were most pronounced in Denmark, the Netherlands and the US, and smallest in Ireland, Italy and Puerto Rico.

Glenn & Weaver (1979:962/3) inspected whether there are intervening variables that can be held responsible for the difference. They introduced seven controls: 'presence of children' (specified in three age categories), 'age' (one's own), 'frequency of churchgoing', 'family income', 'occupational prestige' (of males), 'employment outside the house' (of females) and 'years of school completed'. This analysis was performed on data from four surveys in the US between 1972 and 1975. The difference in happiness between married and unmarried persons appeared to remain for the greater part, both among females and males. In a similar study Ward (1979:867) showed that differences remain after checking for satisfaction with friends as well.

The differences in happiness between the married and the unmarried have not been equally strong at all times. In the Netherlands they increased between 1948 and 1975. In section 7/6.2a we will see that the correlation between happiness and 'marital satisfaction' also increased during that period in the Netherlands. In the US the difference in happiness between married

and single people also widened between 1946 and 1957. However, since 1957 no further change of that kind has occurred in that country.

Not all categories of unmarried people are equally badly off. Things are different for the never-married, the widowed and the divorced. The situation is also different for people who remarried and people who live in concubinage. I will therefore consider each of the categories apart.

Married vs. never married (M 1.2). Great differences in happiness between married and never married persons were shown in Denmark, the Netherlands and the US. Less strong differences were observed in Western Germany and Luxembourg. In several nations the never married appeared to be as happy as the married; e.g. in Britain, Ireland, Italy, France and Puerto Rico. In one investigation the never married turned out to be even happier. This investigation covered three nations: the Dominican Republic, Panama and Yugoslavia. Unfortunately the investigator did not report the differences for each country separately.

The differences in happiness between married and never married people were generally strongest among young persons. Mostly they were relatively pronounced among males as well.

There is one longitudinal investigation on the matter. Nock (1981) followed a sample of Americans in the labor force in 1972 during five years. The ones who got married for the first time during that period did not appear happier at the second interview than at the first; at least not significantly.

Married vs. widowed (M 1.3). Comparison between married and widowed persons reveals even greater differences in happiness. Widowed people appeared to be relatively very unhappy in Belgium, Denmark, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, the US and Western Germany. Smaller, but still considerable differences existed in Britain, France and Puerto Rico. However, in Finland and Ireland widowed people were not less happy than the married. There is no country where the widowed were relatively happier. The differences in happiness were generally more or less similar in both sexes and in all age groups.

The above mentioned longitudinal investigation by Nock in the US considered the effect of widowhood as well. Subjects who had lost their spouse during the five year period appeared to have become considerably less happy.

Married vs. divorced (M 1.4, M 1.5). The happiness of the married was also compared with the appreciation of life among divorced or separated people.

In western Europe and in the US divorced people appeared very unhappy relatively. The differences in Puerto Rico were smaller, but still considerable. There is no country in which the divorced appeared equally happy as the married. Again the differences were similar among males and females and among young and old.

Also the effect of divorce was considered by Nock. Americans who had gone through a divorce during the past five years appeared less satisfied with life at the second interview than at the first.

Remarriage. Three recent investigations in the US compared people who remarried after widowhood or divorce with earlier married people who remained single. The first of these was a cross-sectional one. It compared divorcees who had remarried and those who had not. The remarried appeared considerably happier; in fact as happy as people married for the first time (Weingarten, 1980:55). The other two investigations were longitudinal. One of these followed divorced people during two years; the first interview being held right after divorce. Most respondents appeared happier at the last interview.

This increase was not any more pronounced among the ones who had remarried in the meantime. Still the remarried were happier on an average because remarriage was more frequent among the originally happiest ones. (Spanier & Fürstenberg, 1982). The other longitudinal investigation is the earlier mentioned one by Nock. It observed a slight rise in the appreciation of life of the people who had remarried during the five year period, though not a significant one.

Formally married vs. living as married (M 1.7). The married have also been compared with those living in concubinage. The latter appeared no less happy than the former; at least not in Denmark and the Netherlands in 1975. They rather were somewhat happier there, probably as a result of a honeymoon effect. However, in Puerto Rico in 1964 people living in concubinage were (still?) less happy than formally married couples, though happier than the widowed and the separated.

Happiness hierarchy among the unmarried (M 1.2, to M 1.5). Most investigators also compared between unmarried statuses. It appeared that the never married are generally happier than the widowed and the widowed happier than the divorced. This applies at least in modern western European nations and in the US; a different pattern appearing in Ireland and Puerto Rico.

All investigators on this matter used indicators of 'overall happiness'. Two moreover used indicators of 'hedonic level'. The differences in hedonic level between the marital status categories appeared largely identical to the differences in overall happiness. No investigation has as yet assessed differences in 'contentment'.

b. Living alone or not alone (H 4.1)

Not all unmarried people live alone. Apart from the ones who live in concubinage, there are some who live with their parents, siblings or friends. A study in the Netherlands found singles living with their parents slightly (but not significantly) happier than singles living on their own. Similarly an investigation in northern Wisconsin, US, found less happiness among singles living alone: especially among singles between age 30 and 50. Two American studies among elderly people found slightly less happiness among those living on their own as well.

In this context it is worth remembering the earlier mentioned investigation in the US that showed more happiness among homosexuals living with a steady partner than among gays who live alone. (Section 6/2.3c).

c. Characteristics of the bond (M 2.4)

Obviously marriage does not always bring happiness. As we will see in more detail in section 7/6.2a happiness depends largely on the *satisfaction with marriage*. Glenn & Weaver (1981:165) have even shown that Americans who are dissatisfied with their marriage take less pleasure in life than those who are not married at all. The appreciation of one's marriage is also closely connected with 'hedonic level'.

Not surprisingly happiness was found to be associated with various given *characteristics of the marital relations* as well. Studies in the US have shown that happiness is generally higher when marital partners spend more time together and behave more affectionally to each other. Such aspects of marital quality appeared related to both 'overall happiness' and 'hedonic level'. This pattern is probably typical for modern western marriage only. The overall happiness of American women has furthermore been found related to the 'value similarity with their husband' (Databook part III, section V 1.2).

d. Characteristics of the spouse (M 2.3)

The happiness of married persons was also shown to be related to several characteristics of their partner. It is of particular interest that the happiness of married people was highly related to the 'happiness of their spouse'. At least this was so in the US in 1953. Probably the relationship is less pronounced in more traditional times and cultures. As already noted, the happiness of married women was also found to be related to the 'socio-economic status of the husband' and to his 'employment status'. Burke et al. (1980:265) showed moreover that their happiness is negatively related to the level of 'work demands' the husband reports. Furthermore age differences were observed to play a role. An American study showed that married women who were somewhat younger than their husbands were slightly happier on an average than women who were of the same age or older. The happiness of married men was unrelated to age of the spouse.

e. Discussion

I will not discuss all these findings in detail. Let it suffice to take a closer look at the observed differences between married and unmarried people. A great part of what will be said on this matter, concerns differences between 'good' and 'bad' marriages as well.

I will start with the usual questions about the trustworthiness of the statistical differences and about the direction of causality. Next I will consider three further questions: Firstly, why are not all unmarried people unhappy relatively; secondly, why are things not different for males and females, and thirdly, why the differences are most pronounced in the most modern nations. Before entering into these questions, first some words about findings in a related field of investigation.

The above findings on differences in happiness between married and unmarried persons correspond closely with the results of a large number of investigations on the incidence of *illness*, *mental disturbance* and *suicide*. As early as 1897 Durkheim showed that suicide is more frequent among unmarried people than among married ones. This finding was reproduced in many later studies: in investigations in western nations (e.g. Gove, 1972a) as well as in non-western areas (e.g. Hassan, 1980). Elsewhere I demonstrated that this difference in suicide rates exists in the Netherlands as well and has even grown in the period between 1957 and 1978 (Veenhoven, 1983).

Mortality by causes other than suicide also appeared greater among unmarried people (among others Gove, 1972; Lynch, 1977; Morgan, 1980), e.g. mortality by cancer, heart defects and accidents. Mortality also turned out to be higher among unmarried persons who live on their own than among unmarried persons who share a household with other people than a spouse (Kobrin & Hendershot, 1977). Similar differences appeared with respect to 'ill health' (e.g. Verbrugge, 1979; Morgan, 1980) and 'mental disturbances' (e.g. Gove, 1972; Seagraves, 1980). All these differences are partly due to *selection*: ill and unstable people being less likely to maintain satisfying ties. Yet there is no doubt that they also result from the *protection* that is typically provided by intimate networks. It is worth noting in this context that not only the 'presence' of intimate ties matters, but their 'quality' as well. Renne (1971:341) showed for instance that Americans whose marriage is unsatisfactory have as many health problems as their compatriots who are not married at all. Much of what will be said below concerns these findings as well.

Artefacts? One could well imagine that the observed differences are due to desirability bias. Unmarried persons are generally believed to be unhappier than married ones. (Demonstrated e.g. in the Netherlands in 1975; SCP 1976:259) and could therefore be more apt to admit to dissatisfaction with life. This time there is evidence that no such bias is involved. Firstly, the lot of single females is generally more deplored than that of single males, single women being depicted as bitter spinsters and single men as lighthearted bachelors. Yet we have seen that single males are least happy relatively; especially young ones. Secondly, public opinion has changed in the Netherlands between 1965 and 1975, the Dutch tending to believe less and less that married people are happier than unmarried ones (SCP, 1976:259). However, the actual difference in happiness between the married and the unmarried did not decrease correspondingly. As we have seen above it actually increased in the Netherlands. Finally, it is worth remembering the differences in mortality rates mentioned in the introduction to this discussion. These differences cannot be produced by desirability bias; people do not drop dead at a younger age for such reasons.

If not due to bias, the differences might still be produced by a common relationship of both happiness and marital status to a third factor. Several of the variables that figured in the preceding paragraphs could be attributed such a role. One could for example imagine that 'low income' or a 'poor education' tends to reduce both one's happiness (remember respectively the

sections 6/2.4 and 6/2.5) and one's chances in marriage, thus producing a statistical relation between happiness and marital status. Yet we have seen above that the differences remained after checking for these variables; at least in the contemporary US. It remained after statistical checking for 'occupational status' as well.

Another possibility is that differences in 'conventionality' cloud the issue. Conventional people could be happier and more apt to marry or to shy away from divorce. However, there is little reason for expecting happy people to be more conventional. In section 7/5.2 we will see that happy American students did not appear any more conventional where gender role attitudes are concerned. Furthermore we have seen that differences in happiness between married and unmarried persons remained after checking for 'church going'. It is moreover evident that this way of reasoning cannot explain the difference in happiness between married and widowed people.

As far as women are concerned, the differences cannot be produced by greater burdens of work for the unmarried. In section 6/3.1c we have seen that employed married women are generally not less happy than full-time housewives. In the next section it will appear that the differences cannot be explained either by the fact that most unmarried people don't have children.

One of the possibilities that has not been checked as yet is that the differences are influenced by 'health'. In the next chapter we will see that ill health is detrimental to happiness. (Section 7/1.1). Since ill health also lowers the chances of getting married, it could be responsible for part of the lower happiness among never married people. Health differences could also be involved in the lower happiness of widows, but they are less likely to be responsible for the lower appreciation of life among the divorced.

Insofar as they are not spurious, the differences can again be attributed to two kinds of causal effects: to the effects of happiness on the chances of getting married and to the effects of marriage on the quality of life. These explanatory lines are usually referred to as the 'selection' explanation and the 'protection' explanation respectively.

Do happy people stand a better chance of marriage? The above mentioned longitudinal investigation on remarriage among divorced people in the US (Spanier & Fürstenberg, 1982) demonstrated that happy divorced people stand a better chance of finding a new partner than unhappy ones. This finding fits in well with some experimental observations on the effect of hedonic level on affiliation.

Firstly, there are indications that people who feel pleasant are more apt

to seek contact. Wessman et al. (1960:111) observed for example that their subjects were less apt to engage in social activities when depressed than when feeling elated. Gatley (1969) tried to demonstrate this effect experimentally: he treated an experimental group to a cheerful movie and next asked them to complete some tasks designed to indicate affiliative tendencies. Contrary to his explanation he found no differences with the scores of a control group which had not watched the movie. Possibly the movie did not actually affect their mood. Whatever the cause, it must be recognized that both his investigation and the one of Wessman & Ricks dealt with 'momentary mood' rather than with 'average hedonic level'. As such, their results can at best witness a suggestion.

Two further experimental investigations demonstrated that cheerful people are more easily accepted by others than people who feel depressed. One of these dealt with momentary mood as well, but an other concerned average hedonic level. The first one was performed by Bell (1978:618). He demonstrated that subjects in whom a cheerful mood was induced were more often chosen as a partner with whom to perform a task. The second experiment is one by Coyne (1982:80). On the basis of standard tests 30 American college women were selected who generally felt depressed. Each depressed woman was paired with one who usually did not feel depressed. For comparison an equal number of non-depressed women was randomly paired with another. All the couples were told that they were participating in a study about casual encounters and had to talk together in order to get acquainted. The participants then filled out a questionnaire about how willing they were to see their conversation partner again and how willing they thought their partner was to see her. Women who had chatted with a depressed partner appeared less willing than the controls to work with her again, ask her advice, sit next to her on a three hour bus trip or invite her home. The depressed women appeared to expect such rejection. They were in fact more accurate in that than the non-depressed. In their turn the depressed women were also less willing to have anything more to do with their partner.

So far it is clear *that* happy people stand a better chance to establish contacts and hence to find a life partner: at least as far as the contemporary US is concerned. It is less clear *why* this occurs. Possibly because a positive appreciation of life fosters 'health', and stimulates 'activity'. (To be demonstrated in sections 7/1.1 and 7/1.4). There are also indications that joy in living facilitates the handling of social contacts; the happy are generally more 'open' 'warm' and 'empathic'. (To be discussed in section 7/1.3a). Another thing

that may work to their advantage is that happiness may foster 'self-esteem' (to be discussed in section 7/6.1), which in its turn seems to facilitate intimate contacts (Frenken, 1978).

These effects not only influence the chances of finding a partner, but they can also add to the chance that a marriage, once established, keeps going. In this context it is worth remembering that the happiness of spouses has been found highly related. This would suggest that a happy partner makes a happy spouse, and reversely a discontented spouse an unhappy one. A marriage with an unhappy partner is then more likely to end up in a divorce. Yet this finding does not prove the point definitely. It can also mean that (un)happy people attract each other.

These observations do not rule out the possibility that unhappy people can in some respects be at an advantage. The unhappy are mostly in greater need of social support and could for that reason be more eager to marry and less particular. I do not know any independent evidence for such effects. If they exist at all, they are apparently outweighed by the ones mentioned above.

Does presence of a partner add to the appreciation of life? The two longitudinal investigations leave no doubt that the presence or absence of a spouse does matter to happiness; at least in the contemporary US. Though first marriages and remarriages were not followed by a significant increase in happiness, widowhood and divorce did initiate a considerable decrease. The presence of a spouse is thus at least crucial to the happiness of a large category of Americans. Why is this? Several suggestions were advanced, which are all specific to current western society.

Social acceptance. One explanation is that married people live up to current social role expectations and are hence more likely to receive social respect and acceptance than 'deviant' unmarried persons. These differences in social treatment could influence the appreciation of life directly, or they could influence the development of such attributes as 'self-esteem' and thus affect the appreciation of life indirectly. See e.g. Turner (1970:50/1), Ward (1979:862) and Davies & Strong (1977:112/125). In line with this explanation Ettaugh & Malstrom (1981) showed that American students attribute less positive characteristics to people they believe to be unmarried than to persons presented as married: in particular to the divorced.

Yet this explanation is not a very strong one, at least not as far as modern western nations are concerned. It applies primarily to formally married people, but we have seen that informally married people are as happy as

formally married ones; at least in Denmark and the Netherlands in 1975. This social rejection explanation moreover predicts that the differences between married and unmarried people have lessened in the last decades, unmarried state and divorce having become more common and accepted. However, as we have seen, the differences in happiness between the married and the unmarried tended to increase in the Netherlands and the US. Furthermore, gays are not accepted any better when living together with a steady partner. Yet we have seen that in the US they are happier than gays who live alone. Finally it is clear that widowed people are not typically rejected as deviant; at best some are regarded with pity. Yet they are clearly less happy than the married.

Comfort. Several authors remark that marriage involves the exchange of various services and thus provides the married with more comfort than the unmarried. This reasoning cannot bring us very far either. If not provided by a spouse, most services can be bought; at least by the well-to-do. However, even in the highest incomes brackets unmarried people have been shown to be relatively unhappy.

Social contacts. Ward (1979:868) emphasize that marriage opens doors to other social networks; in particular to the extended family, the ties to which grow more important in later life, when role loss and poor health reduce social contacts. It is a fact that contacts with family and friends contribute to happiness. (To be demonstrated in section 6/4.3). However, it also appeared that unmarried Americans who have established many such contacts on their own, are still considerably less happy than their married compatriots (Wood & Robertson, 1978:371).

Davies & Strong (1977) also argue that married people have the pull over the unmarried where social contacts are concerned. They observe that public life is largely (re)constructed for people living in couples. Singles, they claim, meet with various seemingly trivial contact problems, which cumulatively represent a real barrier to social participation. As yet it is not established to what extent these problems do actually exist, nor to what degree they are responsible for the lower happiness of the unmarried.

Support. Cobb (1976:300) stresses the significance of the 'social support' spouses provide each other with. He depicts that as "information which re-assures the individual that he or she is (1) loved and cared for, (2) esteemed and valued and (3) part of a network of communication and mutual obligation".

Continuous reassurance on these matters is likely to add to the appreciation of life directly. It could also affect it indirectly. Various others suggest for instance that socio-emotional support works as a 'buffer to stress'. As such it would preserve 'physical' and 'mental health'. Happiness depends to a considerable extent on these matters (See respectively 7/1.1 and 7/1.2) Unfortunately it is not clear whether things really work that way.

Correction. Weiss (1969:40) observes that spouses 'guide' each other with information about all sorts of things, thereby correcting maladaptive behaviors. Their interventions are typically early and unobtrusive. Weiss stresses the mental health implications of this guidance. In a similar vein Morgan (1980:639) argues that marriage promotes 'physical health behavior'. Such effects could obviously add to happiness in the long run. Yet once again there is no independent evidence on the matter.

Meaning. One last theme to be mentioned in this context is that the responsibility towards a spouse can add to the 'sense of meaning', providing an evident purpose to live for. The lower suicide rate among the married is often explained in this way. Once more there is little direct evidence on the matter.

Negative effects. The reader should not forget that the bond with a spouse can be detrimental to happiness as well. In fact there is a rich literature on the harm marriage can do. Marriage has been claimed to isolate people from friends and the wider society; to force them into rigid role-patterns - thus oppressing women and children in particular - and to require sexual mono-gamy, thereby frustrating a built-in desire for sexual variation. See e.g. Greer (1971) and Cooper (1970). These objections were strong enough to instigate experiments with so called 'alternative' relationships. There is no doubt that these claims hold some truth, even though they do not apply equally strongly in all conditions. At the same time it is also evident that the disadvantages of married life do not outbalance the advantages in present day western society; at least not at the individual level.

Why are not all categories of unmarried people equally unhappy relatively? As we have seen above, never-married people appeared to be happier than the widowed and the widowed in their turn happier than the divorced. What effects can be involved here?

Let us begin by asking why the never-married appear to be the least badly off, relatively. Two rather obvious reasons can be mentioned: One is that

never-married people have not gone through the ordeal of losing a spouse by death or divorce; the average happiness in this category is therefore not lowered by temporary unhappiness during a period of adjustment or by permanent unhappiness as a result of lasting damage. The other reason is that an unknown percentage of the never-married has chosen positively for single living. Though such a choice is not necessarily a wise one, it is likely to render single living more acceptable. There are moreover reasons for believing that some people can in fact do reasonably well without intimate contacts. Illustrative in this context is Lowenthal's (1964:62) description of some lifelong isolates, who appeared reasonably sound and contented. A third explanation could be that the never-married category probably contains relatively many informally married people; heterosexuals as well as homosexuals. Most investigations inquired about official marital status rather than about the actual living arrangement. Finally, it would seem possible that the difference is due to 'age'; bachelorhood being more joyous and accepted among the young than in later years of life, or young people being happier anyway. However, we have seen earlier that the difference in happiness between married and never-married people is most pronounced in the youngest age categories; also that young people are not happier than the elderly. (Remember section 6/3.1).

Then the question as to why the divorced are generally less happy than the widowed in modern western society. Presumably selection effects are involved here. Unhappy and disturbed people are more likely to get divorced than to bury their spouse. Remarriage is moreover likely to select more stringently among the divorced than among the widowed, the latter category largely consisting of elderly women for whom partners are scarce. Next, it is not unlikely that widowed people have access to a broader network of kin and friends; not only because their contacts did not suffer from a marital conflict, but also because ties with friends tend to be firmer among the elderly. That latter matter will be discussed in more detail in section 6/4.3.

Why are there no differences between males and females? Several of the investigations that were mentioned in the introduction to this discussion documented that marriage is more profitable for men than for women, the differences in 'mortality', 'ill health' and 'mental impairment' being greater between married and unmarried males than between married and unmarried females. This pattern was not reproduced in the studies on happiness at hand here. Widowed or divorced males did not appear unhappier relatively than widowed or divorced females. Only in the case of the never-married did

males turn out to be worse off than females, particularly in the younger age groups. A related inconsistency has been signaled in section 6/2.1. Even though women complain more about all sorts of things and are more often treated by physicians and psychiatrists, they do not appear less happy than men.

Bernard (1976:54/55) explains this paradox by attributing a 'traditional orientation' to married women. Being socialized to regard marriage as a main source of happiness, they would feel guilty when admitting to feel unhappy in spite of being married and hence take resort to defensive reversal. Mugford & Lally (1981) checked that explanation on the basis of data from Australia in 1971. These data showed again many married women reporting a high appreciation of life despite psychosomatic indications of distress. However, the women concerned did not appear particularly 'traditional', there was at least no overrepresentation of elderly and little educated women in this category. On the other hand there was an overrepresentation of women married to younger men and men of lower social rank, which in this respect distinguished them as non-traditional. Mugford & Lally suggest that these women were reluctant to admit the problems of their unconventional choice of partner and therefore kept up face by defining themselves as happy. This is probably not the last word on the matter.

Why are the differences greatest in the most modern western nations? As shown above, the differences in happiness between married and unmarried people are greatest in Denmark, the Netherlands and the US and smallest in Ireland, Italy and Puerto Rico. It also appeared that the differences have grown since the end of World War II, both in the Netherlands and the US. At the beginning of this discussion I noted a parallel increase in the difference in suicide rates in the Netherlands in the same period. This latter trend is the more noteworthy because single living became more the vogue. The number of single households grew considerably (Beukens-de Vries, 1978 on the Netherlands between 1960-1971; Hacker, 1982:3 on the US between 1970-1980). At the same time public opinion became more positive about single living and divorce; remember that between 1965 and 1975 the Dutch also became less inclined to believe that married people are generally happier than singles.

This pattern can be explained in two ways. It can be interpreted as signifying that modern marriage came to set demands that are better met by happy people than by unhappy ones, and it can also mean that the company of a

life partner became even less dispensable in modern society than it already was. These explanations are complementary rather than contradictory.

Happiness more required for modern marriage? Western marriage has changed considerably during the last few centuries. 'Love' and sexuality' gained more prominence at the cost of 'status' and 'money'. Spouses came to spend more time together and withdrew ever more from the wider family and public life. See e.g. Shorter (1975). This more intense interaction is likely to have rendered it more difficult to live with an unhappy partner; not only because sharing joy is probably more satisfying in the long run than sharing sorrow, but also because modern romanticism stresses the responsibility of spouses for each other's happiness. (For that latter point see e.g. Lantz et al., 1975).

Still another thing is that the new pattern sets different demands. Whereas traditional marriage required primarily that spouses abide to conventional duties, modern marriage asks them to keep the flames of love burning, to understand each other and to provide psychological support. These latter tasks are generally more easily met by mentally effective people than by problematic ones and in particular by people who are 'open' to others, 'warm', 'sensitive', 'autonomous' and 'self respecting'. In the next chapter we will see that happy people are characteristically better endowed with these qualities than unhappy ones; to some extent possibly because happiness fosters development of these characteristics (See sections 7/1.2, 7/1.3a, 7/2.1 and 7/6.1b respectively). A more stringent selection for these qualities is then likely to have involved a greater selection for happiness as well.

Company of a spouse less dispensable in modern society? One first thing to note in this context is that modernization involved institutional differentiation. Part of this process is that affective functions were increasingly concentrated in increasingly specialized institutions. Work and political activity became affectively 'colder' and the family 'warmer'; especially the nuclear family of which marriage is the pivot. This development involved an affective drainage of public life in modern nations; contacts outside the house became scarcer, more reserved and less personal. The trend towards affective compartmentalization impoverished the contacts with grandparents, uncles and aunts as well. See e.g. Sennet (1974). This process rendered marriage even more indispensable as a source of affection and thus brought an even greater part of the adult population in the Hymen's boat. As a result it probably drained public life and the wider family even more (Veenhoven, 1979:149/ 150). Obviously such a development is to the disadvantage of the decreasing

number of unmarried people that is left; their sources of social support becoming even smaller. It is not easy to provide convincing evidence for this theory. Yet there is at least empirical support for some of its propositions.

Firstly, there is little doubt that the extended family flourishes more in Ireland, Italy and Puerto Rico than in Denmark, the Netherlands and the US. Illustrative in this context is that Italian-Americans appeared far more involved with their extended families than non-Italian-Americans (Johnson, 1982). In this respect people in the former countries are obviously less dependent on a spouse than in the latter. It is possible that the reduced support of the extended family in Denmark, the Netherlands and the US is partly compensated by more developed friendship networks. Yet nothing of that kind had been established so far.

Secondly, there are indeed differences in the percentage of unmarried adults in the population. In line with the above reasoning it was in the early 1970's higher in Ireland, Italy and Puerto Rico than in Denmark, the Netherlands and the US. For one thing, people married typically at a later age in the former countries than in the latter. Mean ages of first marriage were in 1970 respectively 26,1; 25,8, 23,3 and 23,8; 23,9; 22,7. (Drawn from the various national vital statistics). Further, the proportion of lifelong singles was higher in the first three countries than in the last three. The percentages of never-married people in the age category 45-49 were respectively 23,3; 12,3; 8,1 and 7,9; 7,5; and 5,0 (Drawn from Kurian, 1979:33/34). Puerto Rico does not fit into this pattern too well: it is in fact closer to Denmark than to Ireland and Italy. Lastly, the percentage of unmarried adults decreased in the Netherlands during the period that the correlation between happiness and married status increased. In the US the percentage remained constant, though happiness became more closely linked to marital status there as well. (Trend-data on adult singles drawn from UN 1979:888/909).

Thirdly, there are indications that opportunities for contact outside the home are not equally rich in the countries concerned. Pubs, for instance, flourish better in Ireland and Italy than in Denmark, the Netherlands and the US. For instance in Ireland, in the 1970's, there were six times as many public drinking places per head as in the US and twice as many as in the Netherlands. (Data drawn from Statistical Yearbooks). Consistent with my thesis of the ongoing drainage of public life in modern society, the number of public drinking places per head was almost halved during the post-war decades in both the Netherlands and the US. (Data on the Netherlands drawn from Horecatelling 1971; data on the US from Statistical Abstract). Likewise beer consumption has shifted from the pub to the home in the Netherlands

between 1949 and 1975 (Centraal Bureau voor de Statistiek, Statistiek binnenlandse afzet 1938-1983).

In the fourth place, the modern marriage pattern has isolated the unmarried in the realm of living arrangements as well. Marriage becoming more close and intimate, living-in parents, siblings and adult children were less welcome. Living-in servants and boarding guests left as well. Improving housing facilities in modern nations also made that more of the unmarried came to live on their own. Consequently there are indications that the percentage of single households was greater in Denmark, The Netherlands and the US than in Ireland, Italy and Puerto Rico; the percentages were respectively 22, 17, 18 and 13, 11, 11. (In the years 1965, 1971, 1970 and 1966, 1961, 1970; data from US Statistical Abstract 1981: UN 1976; Beukens-de Vries 1978). Cross-temporal changes in the Netherlands and the US point in the same direction. As noted above, the number of single households in these countries has risen considerably during the period that unmarried people became less happy relatively. In this context it is worth remembering the earlier mentioned finding of Kobrin & Hendershot (1977) that unmarried persons who share a household with kin or friends are less liable to early death.

A final thing is that marriage may have become more central as a source of 'meaning' in modern western society. It is often suggested that modernization involved the destruction of traditional sources of meaning, without replacing them by new ones (e.g. Monod, 1970). If so, we could imagine that the responsibilities towards a spouse became more important as a reason for living, so that people living alone have become more vulnerable.

Still: why so many divorces? These explanations seem to contradict the fact that divorce became more frequent in modern western nations. If marriage became so indispensable, a source for 'social support' and 'meaning', why break it up more often? The answer seems that marriage can work in that way only if the bond is close and affectionate. Consequently we have seen that the happiness of married people depends heavily on the quality of the bond and that spouses who are dissatisfied with their marriage are even more unhappy than people who are not married at all (p.236). Breaking up marriage is then a better alternative, which moreover clears the way for remarriage. Furthermore the earlier mentioned changes in marriage, which may have placed happy people in the advantage, involved a loosening of conventional norms and hence allowed more freedom for dissolving bonds which are no longer based on mutual love.

6/4.2 CHILDREN (F 1.1, F 1.2)

Children are generally seen as an important source of happiness. This was documented in the Netherlands in 1964 (Philips 1966:64) and in the US in 1960 (Robinson & Shaver 1976:16). The happiness of women in particular is believed to depend largely upon presence of children in the house; women being attributed an innate need for mothering. Childless people are hence regarded with pity, even if they don't want children at all (e.g. Veenhoven, 1979:105/8, on the basis of data from the Netherlands in 1977).

Several investigations have inspected to what extent the happiness of adult people is actually linked to offspring. Most focused on the *presence* of children. Five of these compared the happiness of married people who have children with the happiness of married people who have not. Another five compared the happiness of parents with many children with the happiness of parents who have but one or two. Three studies furthermore assessed the happiness of parents whose children left home with the happiness of parents whose children were still living in. Next a few investigations considered the relationship between happiness and the *quality* of contacts with children. Almost all these investigations are from western countries; mostly from the US.

a. Having children or not (F 1.1.1)

Married people with children appeared no happier on average than married people without. In fact they appeared slightly less happy. This was demonstrated in two investigations in the Netherlands and two in the US. A similar result was found in a study which covered three developing countries (Dominican Republic, Panama, Yugoslavia). The latter study found significantly less happiness among married women with children than among married women without. Among married men, parenthood appeared to work positively in these countries. The western studies mentioned above did not discover this difference between males and females. With one exception, these studies used indicators of 'overall happiness', the exception being an American study which focused on 'hedonic level'.

One of the Dutch studies specified for 'age'. In all age categories non-parents appeared slightly happier than parents. A recent study in the US yielded a similar result (Glenn & Weaver, 1979:962/3). Apart from age, this latter study introduced several more control variables, e.g. 'religiousness',

'income', 'education', 'occupational prestige', 'working of the mother' and 'age of the children'. Again: non-parents remained slightly happier than parents.

It would not seem impossible that things are different for unmarried parents. Single parents could be happier than singles living alone, at least in modern western nations where living alone has been shown to be unsatisfactory and where unmarried parenthood has become more or less accepted. However, in 1972 in the US unmarried mothers (still?) appeared relatively unhappy (Andrews & Withey, 1976:291). In the Netherlands in 1977 single parents were even found to be as unhappy as divorced people living alone (Jol, 1983:18). Finally, the earlier mentioned longitudinal investigation among divorced Americans did not show greater happiness among subjects living with children than among the divorced living alone (Spanier & Furstenberg, 1982:717).

The birth of children. Miller & Sollie (1980) studied the transition to parenthood longitudinally. They followed an accidental sample of couples in Knoxville, US, from 3 months before the birth of their first child to 8 months after. Their measure of 'personal well-being' does not fully meet with my demands for the valid measurement of happiness. Yet the result deserves to be noted in this context. It appeared that personal well-being rose right after the birth of the baby and decreased considerably thereafter; the parents ending less happy than they were before it came. Another longitudinal investigation in the US did involve a valid indicator of happiness. It followed a sample out of the national labor force during five years. Contrary to all the above findings it observed a slight (statistically insignificant) rise in happiness among persons who witnessed the birth of their first child during that period (Nock, 1981:710).

Number of children (F 1.1.2). People with many children were not shown to be happier than people who have only one or two. The categories did not differ in overall happiness nor in hedonic level. At least this was not the case in the Netherlands and the US during the last decades. This subject has not yet been investigated in non-western countries.

One investigation in the US specified for 'income'. At the lowest income levels a negative relationship appeared between the hedonic level of parents and the number of children below the age of 21.

The above mentioned longitudinal investigation by Nock also considered the effect of the birth of further children in the family. It demonstrated an

increase in happiness. As such it contradicts the above mentioned synchronic studies.

Leaving home of the children (F 1.2.2). Four investigations in the US compared the happiness of mothers whose children were still living-in with the happiness of mothers whose children had moved out. Contrary to ideas about an 'empty nest syndrome' the latter were not less happy than the former; in fact they were slightly more satisfied with life.

Adult children. A recent investigation in the US compared the happiness of elderly people whose children had left home with the happiness of people of the same age who never had children. The former appeared slightly less happy than the latter (Glenn & McLahanan, 1982). This result corresponds with findings indicating that contacts with off-spring are of little significance for the happiness of elderly people in western nations (See section 6/4.3a for more detail).

b. Relations with children (F 1.2.3)

Though the presence of children as such is typically unrelated to happiness, the quality of the contacts with children is probably quite crucial. The findings on 'closeness' of family relations (p.236) suggest a considerable relationship. Moreover a study in the US found a significant correlation between the hedonic level of mothers and how 'fond' of them their adolescent children claimed to be. In the case of fathers no such relationship appeared.

c. Discussion

Nock's study excepted, all investigations seem to imply that the presence of children does not add to the joy in living. As such they contradict the common belief that children make for happiness. The data do not fit in either with the finding that western people's happiness depends so much on the presence of a spouse and friends. (Demonstrated in the sections 6/4.1 and 6/4.3 respectively). Let's once more begin by establishing whether or not we are dealing with statistical artefacts and then explore the possible causal mechanisms.

Artefacts? It is again possible that desirability bias is involved. As we have seen, public opinion in the nations under review links childlessness with unhappiness. Avowing unhappiness might thus be more acceptable for childless people than for parents; while the latter might pretend to take more pleasure in life than they in fact do because they are expected to enjoy a happy family life. If this is true, parents must in fact be still unhappier relatively than they appeared so far. It has not yet been established to what extent this bias is actually involved.

Next the possibility that the relationship is spurious: One could argue that the positive effects of having children are overshadowed by the fact that parents are older than non-parents on average or have lower incomes. Also, the fact that mothers are less often employed could veil the positive effects. However, we have seen that parents were not shown to be happier when the correlations were checked for 'age', 'income', 'education', 'occupational prestige' and even 'working of the wife'. Quite another possibility is that some of the non-parents renounced having children because they were less 'healthy' had more 'mental problems' or were less 'active'. But there again, parenthood would then be even more detrimental to happiness than it has appeared to be so far. Moreover, this reasoning is not supported by the facts either. Elsewhere I have shown that childless people are not less healthy or more disturbed on average (Veenhoven, 1979:110/113).

One last thing to note is that the results may reflect differences in the proportion of people who have voluntarily chosen their lot, rather than the effects of having children or not. The slightly lower happiness in the category of parents could be due to the fact that part of them is victim of contraceptive failure and is bowed down under the burden of unwanted children. There are indeed indications that almost half of the children were unplanned in the period concerned, one-third of them possibly remaining unwelcome (Veenhoven, 1972:80/90). Hence things could be different in more recent cohorts; better contraception and free abortion having reduced the number of unwanted children drastically. Yet we must realize that the non-parents in the investigations under review were hardly more fortunate. In the cohorts concerned involuntary childless people probably outnumber the voluntary childless ones. See Niphuis-Nell (1979).

Could happiness affect procreation? It is not impossible that substantial positive effects of parenthood have been veiled by selection effects: happy couples tending to continue a childfree lifestyle and unhappy couples seeking amelioration by having children. Unhappiness could also give rise to more

unplanned parenthood as far as it induces risky contraceptive behavior. Yet it is also obvious that unhappiness often keeps people from having children. Nock's longitudinal study would suggest the former effects prevailed in the 1970's in the US.

How could parenthood affect happiness? There is a growing literature on the personal consequences of having children. See among others Veenhoven & Van der Wolk, (1977). Several of these consequences concern conditions that have been shown to be relevant for happiness: e.g. 'family income', 'participation in voluntary organizations', 'contacts with friends' and 'health'. Both positive and negative consequences have been described, the balance of which seems to be highly variable across circumstances. I will not try to summarize all the costs and rewards that may be involved. It must suffice to point out an often overlooked disadvantage of having children, namely their disturbing effect on marriage.

In contrast to the general belief that children add to the quality of marriage (Blake, 1979:248 about public opinion in the US in the 1970's; Veenhoven, 1979:109 about the Netherlands in 1965 and 1970), there are in fact reasons for assuming that their presence is rather detrimental to it. This is at least so in modern western nations, where spouses typically try to keep the flames of love burning and where equality and mutual activity are important prerequisites for a satisfying marriage. Time budget studies in twelve countries showed that couples with children spend less time together than couples without (Szalai et al. 1972:781). In the same vein Bram (1974) demonstrated that children reduce the 'equality' between husband and wife as well, and consequently the degree of 'intimacy' between the spouses. In this context several recent investigations have shown that the arrival of children affects marital satisfaction slightly negatively. See Glenn & McLahanan (1982:67) on the basis of six surveys in the US between 1973 and 1978 and two longitudinal investigations in that same country by Miller & Sollie (1980:461) and Waldron & Routh (1981:787). The decrease in marital satisfaction does not seem to be permanent. When children leave home a restoration sets in (Campbell et al., 1976:430).

This burdening of marital relations by children is probably an important reason why parents are generally slightly less happy than non-parents. As we have seen on p.236 marital quality is quite crucial for happiness in modern western nations. Married persons being concerned here, they may not gain in terms of 'support' and 'meaning' by having children. If negative effects on marriage are indeed involved, these are probably stronger where the first child

is concerned than with further children. Possibly this is why Nock observed an increase in happiness among Americans who had got another child but hardly any among the ones who had their first child.

6/4.3 FRIENDS AND RELATIVES

Ties with friends and relatives are not thought to contribute much to the appreciation of life. References to them are not very frequent in opinion polls about issues that effect happiness. See among others: Wessman, (1956:215) on the basis of data from the US in 1946. Yet there are sizable differences in the happiness of people who have solid bonds with friends or relatives and those who do not. Once more happiness has been related to both the 'presence' and 'quality' of these ties.

a. **Having friends or relatives**

More than twenty investigations inspected whether happy people have more ties with friends or relatives than unhappy ones. The greater part of these studies concern European nations and the US. Next there are investigations from Israel, the Philippines, Poland and Puerto Rico. The findings are basically similar in all these countries.

Number (S 4.1.1). Several studies demonstrated a correlation between happiness and the number of 'close friends' and 'relatives'. The correlations tended to be modest, however, and not always statistically significant. Clear relationships appeared only in Poland and among aged and mentally ill persons in the US. There was no difference between married and unmarried persons in this respect. Indicators of both 'overall happiness' and 'hedonic level' were involved.

Frequency of contact (S 4.1.2) Happiness also appeared positively related to the frequency of contact with friends and relatives. This was demonstrated in several synchronic investigations, as well as by some longitudinal ones. Again the relationship appeared highest among the most aged persons; especially among the widowed, retired and physically ill. Some investigations also found more pronounced relationships in the lower social strata, but

others did not find this difference.

Happiness appeared more closely related to frequency of contact with 'friends' than the frequency of contacts with 'relatives', particularly among aged people. Several studies on the 'morale' of elderly people in the US also showed contacts with friends to be more important than contacts with kin (e.g. Wood & Robertson, 1978; Arling, 1976). Furthermore, happiness appeared to correspond more closely with the frequency of contacts with friends among elderly never married Americans, than among their married contemporaries. With respect to frequency of contacts with neighbors and relatives no such differences appeared (Ward, 1979:866).

The investigations again involved indicators of both 'overall happiness' and 'hedonic level'.

Popularity (P 4) In this context it is worth mentioning that happiness was shown to be related to popularity. Among mentally retarded males, hedonic level appeared to be highly related to 'staff-rated popularity' and to 'sociometric choice'. Overall happiness was furthermore shown to be related to 'self-perceived popularity', e.g. among American college students and among Dutch adults.

b. Characteristics of the relation (S 4.1.3)

Eight investigations moreover looked into the qualitative aspects of ties with friends and relatives. All are from western nations. They observed somewhat more happiness among people who claim to have a friend or relative with whom they can 'talk about intimate matters' and among people who report 'appreciation and concern' for their friends. Happiness was also found to be higher among people who feel they 'share value orientations' with others and among those who 'expect to be helped' when they are in trouble. Happiness was furthermore found to be related to several more distant ratings of 'closeness' of family ties. It was found more closely related to 'value similarity' and 'closeness' among women than among men.

Satisfaction (S 1.7.1/S 1.7.3) People who feel they get on well with friends or relatives appeared happier than those who view these relationships negatively. In fact their happiness was found more closely related to the 'appreciation' of contacts than to the actual frequency of contact. Generally the relationship appeared to be more pronounced among women than among men, and more

pronounced among unmarried persons than among the married. Not all investigations found identical differences, however.

Closed circle of friends (S 4.7) A Dutch investigator asked his respondents whether or not their friends and acquaintances know each other. Happy persons answered that question affirmatively somewhat more often.

Married friends (S 4.7) Another study in the Netherlands inquired about the number of married people among one's four closest friends. In this respect there was no difference between happy and unhappy persons; neither among males nor females. Unfortunately the investigator did not specify between married and unmarried people.

Value similarity (V 1.2) In section 6/4.1b it was noted that married American women are happier when they feel they share a 'philosophy of life' with their husband. The happiness of these women was also related to perceived value similarity with friends or relatives they see at least once a month. Among unmarried women no such relation appeared.

Expected assistance (S 4.1.3) The study just mentioned also related happiness to the degree to which one 'expects to be helped in case of trouble'. Expected assistance from various network members appeared to be positively related to overall happiness among unmarried women, but unrelated to it among married ones.

c. Having a confidant(e)

'Presence' and 'quality' of ties to relatives and friends meet in the notion of a 'confidant(e)'. Lowenthal & Haven (1968:25) have shown that widowed people with such a confidant(e) maintain higher 'morale' than their fellow-sufferers without. Not surprisingly Campbell (1981:111) found the presence of a confidant(e) to be linked with greater happiness. Adult Americans who claimed to have close contact with someone other than spouse or child were more satisfied with life than those who did not. This applied to both the unmarried and the married. Among the former the relationship was stronger than among the latter. Yet unmarried people with a confidant(e) were still less happy than married people without.

d. Discussion

The effects involved in these correlations are probably highly similar to those we met in the discussion on 'marriage'. So a few short remarks may suffice.

Artefacts? In this case the correlations are even less likely to be due to parallel desirability bias, friendship being less recognized as a source of happiness than marriage. However, the same spurious factors can be involved, and this time there are less data to check these possibilities. All we can say is that the correlation is not due to spurious effects of 'physical health'.

Could happiness foster friendship? In the discussion on marriage we have seen that cheerfulness stimulates affiliative behavior and that cheerful people tend to be preferred to depressed ones by others. These tendencies apply to friendship as well. Yet it is again possible that unhappy people need friends more urgently and hence invest more energy in friendships. It is unclear what tips the scale.

How could friendship affect happiness? In the case of marriage it was clear that the correlation could not be wholly attributed to a greater marriage chance of the happy: in particular not where widowhood is concerned. As for friendship no such evidence is available. Yet there is some experimental evidence that amiable social contacts do add to happiness; at least among isolated elderly people. Three investigations demonstrated that the 'morale' of such people improved slightly when being paid regular visits during a period of some months. See Saltz, (1971); Arthur et al., (1973) and Schulz, (1976). The indicators of 'morale' involved in these investigations do not meet my demands for valid measurements of happiness. Nevertheless the results suggest strongly that personal contacts outside the realm of the family can contribute to the appreciation of life.

The next question is *how* friendships contribute to happiness. Friendships can obviously serve many of the functions attributed to marriage. They also provide 'comforts', facilitate further 'social contacts' and may serve as a source of 'support', 'correction' and 'meaning'. Yet friendship and marriage are not precisely functional equivalents. Marriage provides things that friendship doesn't: sex for one thing, which is not only a source of gratification in itself, but also a powerful binder and a means of communicating support. Moreover, marriage is typically more durable than friendships and comprises more shared activities and mutual obligations. Remember that unmarried

people with a close friend were still less happy than the married without. On the other hand, friendships seem to provide gratifications that are not involved in marriage; married people without a close friend being less happy than people with both a spouse and a further 'confidant(e)'. Apparently somewhat specialized social relations are involved here. See Wood & Robertson (1978: 370-373) for a further discussion of this matter.

Unlike the case of marriage, friendships are not liable to involve severe burdens and restrictions, and hence unlikely to reduce happiness to an appreciable extent. Engagements being less fixed generally, the relationship can more easily be changed or dissolved when the liabilities exceed the assets.

6/5 SUMMARY

Living conditions are generally believed to determine happiness to a large extent. When asked what would make them happier, people usually respond in terms of 'more affluence', 'better work', 'finer family relations' and sometimes 'a better society'. There are indeed considerable differences in happiness between people living in different conditions. However, these differences do not always correspond with current beliefs.

6/5.1 CHARACTERISTICS OF SOCIETY

There are currently great differences in average happiness in the various parts of the world. People in Asia and Africa are typically least happy, while inhabitants of western nations tend to be most satisfied with life. Within the western world there are also striking differences; people in France, W-Germany and Italy are for instance less happy than people in Australia, Scandinavia and the US. These differences appeared fairly stable through time. Unfortunately no data are available for the communists countries.

Surprisingly nobody has, as yet, tried to identify the social system characteristics that are responsible for these differences. A first look reveals strong statistical relationships with several economic and political features. Alas, there are as yet hardly any comparable data on cultural characteristics of the nations concerned here.

Economic characteristics The available data allow an assessment of the relation between average happiness in nations and four economic characteristics: 'economic prosperity', 'economic growth', 'economic security' and 'income equality'.

As far as *economic prosperity* is concerned, the data leave no doubt that people in poor countries are currently less happy than inhabitants of the affluent nations. In fact a more or less curvilinear relationship appears: the correspondence between average happiness and gross-national product per capita being more pronounced in the poorest part of the world than in the richest one. As such it neatly reflects the law of diminishing returns. It is not impossible that the correlation is largely spurious, happiness actually depending on matters that happen to parallel affluence, such as 'political freedom' and 'democracy'. As far as economic prosperity is the cause, it seems to add most forcibly to happiness to the extent that it forestalls unbearable material discomfort. Within the poorest part of the world, there is at least a strong correlation between happiness and the percentage of people living in extreme 'poverty' and the percentage of people suffering from 'hunger'. It is as yet not specified to what extent further 'luxury' adds to the appreciation of life or how it might do so.

In some countries *economic growth* over a 15 year period appeared to be paralleled by a rise in average happiness. However, in some others it was not. It is as yet unclear in what conditions economic growth adds most to happiness and how. Longitudinal data on the effects of economic depression are not yet available.

Contrary to common suggestion, average happiness does not appear particularly high in the nations that provide most *economic security*. There is at least no correspondence between average happiness and 'inflation rates', while a correspondence with 'social security expenditures' only exists in the poor countries (probably a spurious effect of affluence).

There is modest support for the claim that *income inequality* in a country is detrimental to the happiness of its citizens. It is again not specified to what extent this correlation is spurious.

Political characteristics. Three political characteristics were considered: the degree of 'freedom' in the country, the level of 'democracy' and the incidence of political 'violence' and 'protest'. As far as *political freedom* is concerned it is clear that people are currently happiest in the nations where governments are least 'coercive' and where the 'freedom of the press' is held most in respect. The correlations were in

fact as strong as in the case of 'economic prosperity'. This time they were quite sizable within the richest part of the world as well, thus demonstrating an affluence-independent relationship. Various other - as yet unspecified - spurious factors may be involved, however. To some extent the correlation might also stem from effects of (un)happiness of citizens on the level of freedom. As far as freedom does actually add to happiness it can do so directly by sparing people the frustrations of oppression as well as in various indirect ways, such as by promoting their 'self respect' in the long run and by fostering the notion that they are in 'control' of their lot. Apart from the positive effects negative ones may also exist.

Similar strong statistical relations appeared to exist between average happiness and the *level of democracy* in the country; both with the degree to which the political reality fits in with the ideal of a 'liberal democracy' and with the degree to which associational interest groups can express their interests ('interest-democracy'). The correlations were again quite sizable both in the world-sample and among western nations. It has not yet been specified how much common variance remains after checking for effects of various economic and cultural variables. Nor is it certain to what extent the correlations mean that the contentment of citizens adds to the chances of democracy or to what degree democracy contributes to their appreciation of life. Once more it is not established either what positive (and negative) effects on happiness are actually involved and in which conditions these are the most pronounced.

Finally, it appeared that happiness is relatively low in nations characterized by a high incidence of *political violence* and *political protest*. This applies both to political unrest during the past decades and to present civic disorder. The correlation exists again in the poorest part of the world as well as in the most affluent part. Again various - as yet unidentified - spurious factors may be involved and again the correlations may mean that unhappiness evokes protest rather than that prevalence of political unrest renders people unhappy. Possible effects of political unrest on happiness are once more likely to be complex and conditional.

Peace and war. There is little doubt that warfare is generally detrimental to the happiness of people in afflicted countries. The scars of World War II are for instance visible in the happiness levels in the countries concerned. Thirty years later they still differentiate between the most and the least afflicted, and between winners and losers. Various effects are likely to be involved: at the social system level harm to 'economic prosperity', 'political freedom' and

'political stability' and at the individual level in many cases a disorganization of 'intimate ties', a shattering of 'health' and an undermining of 'mental effectiveness'.

Some characteristics of the local environment. Various investigators inspected whether inhabitants of *rural areas* are happier than inhabitants of *urban areas*. Differences appeared to be small or non-existent in both the poorest and the most prosperous nations, while in the medium prosperous nations town dwellers appeared typically happier than their compatriots living in the country. As such the data contradict the so-called 'urban malaise' theory.

Similar but less pronounced differences appeared when the happiness of inhabitants of *small towns* was compared with the happiness of people in *big cities*. An exception to this pattern is the slightly lower happiness of people living in the centres of large metropolitan areas in the US.

One American investigation further found somewhat less happiness in an *economically depressed community* than in a prosperous one and even more in a less prosperous but economically improving city. Various mechanisms may be involved, one being 'selective migration'.

6/5.2 ONE'S PLACE IN SOCIETY

Living conditions are generally not identical for all members of society. Consequently there are considerable differences in happiness between social categories. However, not all the differences in social status are paralleled by differences in appreciation of life. Neither are the differences equally pronounced in all nations. In contemporary western countries the variables at hand are only modestly related to happiness. Together they explain no more than 10 percent of its variance. Differences in happiness *between* western nations seem greater than differences in happiness *within*.

Gender. All over the world women appeared equally happy as men. Yet western studies found young women to be happier than young men and elderly men happier than elderly women. These differences seem largely due to differences in 'marital status'.

Age. People of different age also appeared equally happy on average, at least as far as overall happiness is concerned. Yet there are reasons for believing that ageing tends to reduce joy in living, the observed non-difference veiling

both 'selective survival' and 'acquiescence'. The acquiescence of elderly people gives itself away in a combination of relatively high 'contentment' and low 'hedonic level'.

Minority status. Blacks appeared to be less happy than Whites in both post-revolutionary Cuba and the postwar US. Surprisingly the successful emancipation of Blacks in the latter country aggravated the differences in happiness rather than reduced them. Immigrants and homosexuals also appeared relatively unhappy in the US. In Nigeria happiness was found to be lower in a religious minority group.

Income. Rich people are generally happier than poor ones, but the differences are not equally pronounced across different times and cultures. Currently they are largest in India, Israel and the Philippines and smallest in North-America and Western-Europe. In the latter parts of the world the differences decreased during the last decades. These variations have some correspondence with differences in 'national income', 'income-inequality' and 'income-security'. Contrary to predictions of the law of diminishing returns, the statistical relationship between happiness and income appeared to be linear: both in western and in non-western nations. Though it is evident that earning a relatively good income can add to the appreciations of life, the observed differences can at least partly be due to the tendency of happy people to be "healthier", more 'active' and more 'sociable', and hence to be more successful economically; at least where 'open' societies are concerned.

Education. Highly educated people were also shown to be happier than their poorly educated compatriots. The differences are greater in the poor countries than in rich nations and decreased considerably in the latter during the last decades. Though sometimes quite sizeable, the statistical differences can be misleading, the possibility that they are spurious not having been checked sufficiently as yet. Again the differences may also mean that happiness adds to educational success. As far as education contributes to happiness it does so largely by adding to the chance of earning a good income. There is little evidence for the 'educationalists' claim that schools open the way to greater happiness by improving character. It seems rather to foster discontent by opening windows to gratifications that remain out of reach.

Occupational prestige. People in prestigious occupations are generally happier than people in disdained jobs. It has not yet been established to what extent

these differences reflect the beneficial effect of public admiration. Probably they are largely due to differences in 'income' and 'work-characteristics'.

Global social rank. Many investigators found people at the top of the social ladder to be happier than their compatriots at the bottom. The differences were mostly stronger in the poor countries than in the rich one. In some of the rich nations the differences have largely disappeared during the last decades: probably as a result of fading class distinctions. Consequently some recent studies in western nations found happiness unrelated to *social mobility* and to *status consistency*. Unfortunately most of these studies are not clear as to what rank differences are involved. Further, it is again largely unspecified to what extent the observed differences are spurious.

6/5.3 WORK

Working is generally believed to add to happiness; some kinds of work even more than others. These views are only partly supported by the data.

(Un)employment. Recent studies in western nations found no great differences in happiness between employed and unemployed people. Unemployment was still most closely related to unhappiness among chief wage earners. Retired persons appeared only slightly less happy than working people of the same age, and full-time housewives turned out to be as happy as employed married women. Careful elaboration did not change that latter non-difference. Furthermore, part-time employed women and students did not appear happier than unemployed ones. The few differences that were found do not necessarily reflect the beneficial effects of working. They can be due to spurious factors (e.g. health) or to activating effects of joy in living. Moreover, working seems to contribute to happiness only among people who want to work: at least in contemporary western society.

Occupation. All over the world happiness was found to be highest among people in 'professional' and 'managerial' occupations. 'clerical workers' were typically second best, followed by 'skilled workers'. 'Unskilled workers' and 'farmers' are generally least happy; particularly in the poor countries. In spite of their remarkable consistency these findings are not very informative. It has not yet been established to what extent they reflect differences in 'quality of work' as such, or effects of 'income', 'education' and occupational

prestige'. It is dubious whether the same hierarchy would remain when these variables are checked statistically.

Voluntary work. Studies in western nations found people who are involved in voluntary tasks in clubs, churches and political organizations to be more satisfied with life than their compatriots who are not. It is again unclear whether this difference is due to beneficial effects of working. It can also be caused by spurious factors, or result from a tendency on the part of the happy to join voluntary organizations more easily.

6/5.4 INTIMATE TIES

Primary relations do not matter less to happiness than socio-economic factors: especially not in the most modern western nations.

Spouse. People who have a *steady life partner* were found to be happier than people who live alone. Formally married people as well as people living in concubinage appeared typically happier than never-married people. The latter were in their turn happier than widowed people, and divorced people most unhappy of all. These differences in happiness between married and unmarried people appeared to be less pronounced in Ireland, Italy and Puerto Rico than in Denmark, the Netherlands and the US. In the latter two countries the differences have grown considerably in the postwar decades. Apart from the presence of a spouse as such, the *quality of the marital relation* has been shown strongly related to happiness. These statistical differences stand up to elaboration reasonably well. Undoubtedly they are the results of two kinds of causal effects: firstly, joy in living adding to the chance of getting/staying married, and secondly, marriage contributing to the quality of life in various ways and thus to the appreciation of it.

Children. Strangely enough, the presence of children seems not to add to the happiness of married people, but rather to be slightly detrimental to it. This pattern was observed in western as well as in non-western nations and remained after various potentially spurious factors have been checked. It is not yet established whether happy people are more apt to have children than the unhappy. As for the effects of children on happiness, it seems that they add little to the rewards already provided by the spouse, but burden the marital relation slightly.

Friends and relatives. People who have regular contacts with friends or relatives appeared generally happier than people who have not. Having a 'confidant(e)' in particular was closely related to happiness. The correlations were generally stronger among the unmarried than among the married, and relatively pronounced among elderly and ailing persons. Though bonds with friends and relatives seem to relate to happiness in much the same way as the bond with a spouse, they seem to provide somewhat different rewards.

CHAPTER 7

HAPPINESS AND INDIVIDUAL CHARACTERISTICS

Obviously happiness does not only depend on (external) living conditions, but also on (internal) individual characteristics. Consequently many investigators have tried to identify differences between happy and unhappy people. Some of them hoped to find guidelines for therapy and education. Again a wealth of data came into the open. These data can be classified in six main categories.

The first and broadest category covers various characteristics that have been gathered under terms such as 'vitality', 'competence' and 'fitness'. All these characteristics increase the likelihood that one will be able to cope successfully with the problems of life. The adaptive value of individual characteristics being variable across situations, I have chosen to label them with the more neutral term of *personal resources*. The variables involved are 'physical health', 'mental effectiveness', 'activity level' and 'richness of mental experience'. The relationship between happiness and command over these resources will be discussed in section 7/1.

The second category consists of more neutral *personality traits*. Psychologists have demonstrated various consistent differences in habitual tendencies to react in one way rather than another, a few of which figured in empirical happiness investigations. In section 7/2 we will meet with differences in 'aptness to believe that one is in control of one's own fate', differences in the

characteristic 'handling of threatening information', differences in 'aptness to like things or not' and various differences in 'time orientation'.

The third category of personal characteristics concerns the habitual patterns of behavior which I have labeled *lifestyles*: whether one tends to get up early, what kind of food one prefers, whether one lives a life of luxury, etc. The findings on the relationships between happiness and lifestyle variables are presented in section 7/3.

Fourthly, several investigators have inspected whether happy people differ from unhappy ones with respect to the things they want from life. The investigations covered subtly different matters, such as 'aspirations', 'goals' and 'subconscious preferences'. I gathered them under the label of *longings*. The result will be discussed in section 7/4.

In the fifth place happiness has been related to individual tendencies which I have characterized as *convictions*. They do not involve wants for oneself, but rather more general ideas about how things are and how they ought to be. I will report on these matters in section 7/5,

Finally section 7/6 will deal with the relationship between happiness and the *appreciation of various aspects of life*.

It will appear that correlations between happiness and these personal characteristics are generally stronger than the correlations presented in the foregoing chapter. When interpreting these statistical relationships some problems of interpretation will appear more intricate than in the foregoing chapter. Firstly, the chance of biased correlation is generally greater. As we are mostly dealing with self-reported characteristics, the correlations with self-reported happiness can easily be inflated by parallel mood-bias or parallel desirability bias. Secondly, we will meet more often with the possibility that correlations are due to the effects of happiness. How happy one is can obviously influence things such as one's 'longings', one's 'self esteem' and one's 'aptness to face reality'. As we will see it is often impossible to unravel the various effects that can be responsible for the correlations found. Yet I will not ignore the problem and will consider systematically the effects that may possibly be involved.

Like the foregoing one this chapter draws also on findings reported in full detail in the Databook. The codes between brackets behind section titles refer to the relevant paragraphs in part III of that volume.

7/1 HAPPINESS AND PERSONAL RESOURCES

Most investigators who tried to find out what the 'happy man' looks like, have focused on traits that promise success in coping with the problems of life. People fitted well with such traits were expected to create better conditions for themselves and hence to take more pleasure in life. Typically this did indeed turn out to be the case.

7/1.1 PHYSICAL HEALTH (H 2.1)

Many investigations related happiness to physical health; often in the context of a search for psychological causes of disease. Most found sizable correlations. Happiness was found more closely related to self-perceived health than to health status as assessed by doctors.

a. Medical ratings of general health (H 2.1.1)

In two investigations among elderly Americans, physical health was assessed on the basis of an examination by a physician. People rated as 'healthy' appeared to report slightly more overall happiness than people rated as 'unhealthy'. One of these investigations found that the relationship disappeared after statistical checks for 'self-perceived health'. An early investigation among English students showed a much stronger correlation between health and hedonic level. In that study 'health' was rated by a visiting doctor and the lecturer in physical exercise, and 'hedonic level' by the classmaster and peers. As these ratings have probably overlapped to some extent, the correlations are at least partly contaminated.

b. Self-perceived health (H 2.1.2)

Twenty-five investigations assessed the correlation between happiness and the individual's own estimate of his health. Quite sizable correlations appeared. Strong statistical relationships with overall happiness were observed in Israel, the Netherlands, Poland and the US. Hedonic level was shown related to self-rated health in Puerto Rico.

The relationship was mostly similar among people of different 'age', 'gender' and 'social rank'. In some instances it appeared somewhat stronger among elderly people and people of low social rank. Recently Ward (1979:866) has shown it to be more pronounced among elderly never-married Americans than among their married compatriots of the same age.

Five studies related self-rated health to both 'overall happiness' and 'hedonic level'. Two American ones showed greater correlations with hedonic level than with overall happiness, but another found no difference. No difference appeared either in two Israeli studies.

Next to all these synchronic investigations there is also a longitudinal one. In a study among males at the age of retirement in the US Thompson et al. (1960:168) showed that the subjects who had rated their health as 'poor' at the first interview appeared typically less happy two years later. The decrease in happiness among these men was greater than the decrease among the ones that had rated their health as 'good'. The differences existed among persons had retired meanwhile as well as among the ones who were still working. This investigation is summarized in exhibit 5/3b on page 130-131.

c. Specific health-complaints (H 2.1.4; H 2.2)

An investigation in the Netherlands showed reporting of various specific complaints to be more frequent among the unhappy. The differences were least pronounced as far as *physical complaints* were concerned, for instance: 'complaints about the stomach', 'chest pains' and 'shortness of breath'. The correspondence between unhappiness and claimed *psychosomatic complaints* was stronger, especially with complaints about 'sleeplessness', 'feeling tired', 'restlessness' and 'nervousness'.

The relationship between unhappiness and psychosomatic complaints has appeared to be strongest among unmarried persons and those in the lower social strata. It was also found to be relatively strong among persons who perceived themselves to be physically healthy. Most investigations found no differences between males and females or between young and old.

Specific health-complaints have been shown to be related to both 'overall happiness' and 'hedonic level'. It is hard to say whether they correlate more strongly with the one or the other.

These results concerned synchronic investigations: Brenner (1979) investigated the relation between happiness and health-complaints longitudinally.

He discovered that periods of depressive affect were followed by a rise in somatic problems. Below I will discuss the relevance of this finding.

d. Physical handicaps (H 2.1.4)

Two investigations in the US compared the happiness of physically handicapped people with non-handicapped ones. The first study found only slightly less happiness among the handicapped: both among people who had been born with a handicap and among accident victims (Cameron et al. 1971, 1973). This study is not convincing however, the contrast group of 'non handicapped' consisting of people who had spent a similar time of their life in hospitals. The second study compared 'paralyzed accident victims' with a control group picked at random from the telephone directory. It found the former clearly less happy than the latter. (Brickman et al. 1978:21).

Happiness has also been related to reports of minor physical disabilities, such as difficulties in walking, bending, seeing and hearing. Studies of this kind have been performed in the Netherlands and in the US. The disabled appeared slightly less happy than the average population, but mostly not significantly.

The investigations summarized here have used indicators of 'overall happiness' as well as indicators of 'hedonic level'. The results are very similar.

e. Longevity (H 2.1.3)

Palmore's (1969) longitudinal investigation among elderly Americans deserves special attention. Volunteers participating in his study of aging were examined by a physician and interviewed about various attitudes, activities and social relations. Their happiness was estimated by the interviewer. Fifteen years later half of this group had died. The number of years they had lived after the interview was established. Next the number of years the survivors were likely to live was estimated on the basis of actuarial life-expectancy tables. Then a 'longevity quotient' was computed: the number of years lived after examination divided by the actuarial age-expectation at that time. This quotient appeared positively correlated with the earlier happiness rating. The relationship with earlier happiness appeared even stronger than the one with earlier physical health.

In this context it is worth mentioning that happiness is currently highest in

those parts of the world where the average life expectancy is longest. When I compared the happiness averages from the countries in the Gallup/Kettering world-survey (see section 6/1) with life-expectancy in these countries (drawn from Kurian, 1979:243/4) a correlation of +.80 appeared ($p < .01$; table not shown).

f. Discussion

So far it is evident that happiness and health are statistically related. However, that does not necessarily imply that happiness is a fruit of good health. The correlations may in fact be artefactual, or may result from effects of happiness on health. Below I will shortly consider these possibilities. I will then discuss how health could possibly affect happiness.

Artefacts? The correlations between happiness and self-rated health could result from parallel response bias. People who are apt to present themselves positively may boast of their happiness and health, while less pretentious people may respond more modestly to questions on these matters. If such differences do indeed exist, they may create or augment a statistical relationship between health and happiness. Selective desirability bias could play a role as well. Admitting unhappiness to oneself would seem more excusable for someone who is in poor health than for someone who has no such obvious conditions to complain about. Unhappy responses would then be more frequent among ailing persons. As yet it is unclear whether such effects do actually occur or not. At the same time it is highly improbable that they are responsible for all the common variation of happiness and self-rated health. Self-rated health is at least partly dependent on actual health status and we have seen that happiness is modestly related to doctor's estimates of health and to longevity.

Still, it is possible that even these latter correlations are artefactual. They could be due to a common relationship of both happiness and health with a third factor; for instance with 'occupation' or with 'marital status'. Several investigators recognized that possibility and therefore checked the correlations. It appeared that the relationship between happiness and *physician-rated health* remains after specification by 'gender' and 'age'. The link between happiness and *self-rated health* also remained after checking for 'gender' and 'age' and it also withstood controls for 'income', 'education', 'social prestige', 'employment status' and 'social participation'. Studies

carried out after 1975 have moreover shown that the relation exists among the married as well as among the unmarried (though stronger among the latter, Ward, 1979:866) and among people who have hobbies as well as among those who have not (Van Loon & Dooghe, 1978:290). These latter investigators have also shown that the relationship remained when several of these variables were checked on together. The relationship between (earlier) happiness and *longevity* has been specified as well. It appeared to exist in both sexes and among Blacks as well as among Whites. Obviously this does not prove conclusively that the correlations are not spurious. Exhaustive proof never can be provided. Yet some rather evident possibilities have been checked.

Does happiness affect health? There are good reasons for assuming that the relationship is at least partly due to the effect of happiness on health. As we have seen above, Brenner's longitudinal investigation showed that somatic complaints tend to be preceded by depressive affects, while Palmore's investigation demonstrated that unhappy people die earlier. Little is known about the mechanisms involved.

Possibly so-called 'stress' reactions are responsible. Dissatisfaction with life may give rise to bodily alarm states, such as higher blood pressure, higher muscle tonus and faster digestion, which may cause harm in the long run. Brenner suggested an explanation among these lines. He hypothesizes that ". . . depressed affect involves continuing high density neural firing, which over a period of months, causes a reduction of postsynaptic biochemical amine receptor cell sensitivity in the brainstem with the diencephalon as the major site . . .". This would result in "... functional impairments responsible for the somatic problems ..." (p. 737). As yet it is unclear whether unhappiness does actually give rise to such bodily reactions. All we know is that overall happiness has appeared to be unrelated to 'blood pressure', and that hedonic level had been found slightly negatively related to 'serum cholesterol level' and positively to 'galvanic skin response' (See Databook part III section P 2.3). Even if there were evidence that unhappiness tends to give rise to chronic bodily mobilization, the link to bodily impairment would still remain uncertain.

Another explanation is that unhappy people care less about their health: that, perceiving their life as less worthwhile, they tend to neglect themselves: take more risks, pay less attention to what they eat and drink and are less careful in matters of hygiene (Van Schaik; personal communication). It is yet unclear whether unhappy people do actually tend towards sloppy health behavior. All we know is that they do not distinguish themselves from happy

persons with respect to eating, drinking or smoking (To be shown in section 7/3b).

Does health affect happiness? At the same time there are indications that ill health depresses happiness. Remember the longitudinal investigation among American males at the age of retirement.

It is evident that ill health can affect happiness in various ways. First of all the pain and anxiety involved will tend to depress hedonic level and hence overall happiness. Moreover ill health is likely to damage several conditions that have been shown to be of importance for happiness. Chronic illness can sometimes lead to a drop in 'income', especially in those countries where the level of income is most closely linked to happiness (countries mentioned in section 6/2.1). Remember that the correlations appeared to be relatively strong among people of low social rank. Chronic illness may also reduce the rewarding 'participation in voluntary organizations' and it may burden the crucial 'contacts with intimates'. (Effects on happiness were discussed in respectively section 6/3.2 and 6/4). In this context it is worth bringing back to mind that the correlations were most pronounced among socially isolated people; namely unmarried people and the elderly. Ill health can furthermore be detrimental to several personal qualities that will be discussed later on in this chapter: for instance to the person's activity level (section 7/1.4) and to his self-respect (section 7/6.1). Obviously the effects of illness are not identical for everyone everywhere, much depending on preferences and resources, and on the support ailing people meet with in their environment. In this context it is worth remembering that all these studies are from modern western nations: most from the contemporary US.

So far it is evident that happiness and health can mutually influence each other. It is not improbable that circular effects are involved in their interaction.

7/1.2 GENERAL MENTAL EFFECTIVENESS

I refer to 'mental effectiveness' as the degree to which an individual is able to cope realistically with the problems of life without being hindered by inner troubles such as uncontrollable emotions, disturbed perceptions or compulsive drives. It is difficult to delineate the concept precisely and even more difficult to measure it adequately. Notwithstanding that, it has figured in

several happiness studies. When reporting the results of these studies, I will distinguish between '*general mental effectiveness*' (often called 'mental health') and '*specific mental abilities*' (such as e.g. 'empathy' and 'intelligence'). This section deals with the relationship between happiness and general mental effectiveness. Its relationship with some specific proficiencies will be discussed in the next section.

Investigators who related happiness to general mental effectiveness all worked with constructed averages of various mental abilities. Apparently they hoped to tap some core-ability, comparable with the illustrious 'G factor' in intelligence. In fact three kinds of scores have been used.

The first are the well-known 'impairment scores'. Typically, the investigator inspects whether the subject displays any obvious sign of mental disfunctioning, for instance: whether his cognitive functioning is hampered by excessive 'defense' or by 'delusions', whether he suffers from affective disorders, such as uncontrollable 'aggression', unidentifiable 'anxiety' or disturbing 'mood changes', and whether in the conative field he displays 'compulsive behaviors' or 'inhibitions'. Psychosomatic symptoms, such as 'headaches' 'excessive sweating' and 'nervousness' are mostly also taken to indicate mental impairment. When a person suffers many such handicaps he is obviously less able to deal with the problems of life. Metaphorically such persons are labeled as 'mentally ill'.

Scores of the second sort focus on the positive traits a person is endowed with. There is more variety in the positive traits mentioned in this context than in the traits currently considered as pathological; the abilities required for keeping one's head above water being less complex than the proficiencies involved in 'fully functioning'. Yet there is global agreement that some positive traits are particularly useful; at least in our society. Great emphasis has been laid on 'autonomy', 'frustration-tolerance', 'mental stability' and 'identity' (Jahoda, 1958). In this context the term 'positive mental health' has been used.

The last way of assessing general mental effectiveness is to place both impairments and capacities in a developmental perspective. The investigator then considers whether the person has succeeded in mastering the problems that most people meet on their way to adulthood. The metaphor used in this context is the one of 'mental maturity'.

All these three kinds of indicators of mental effectiveness have been used in happiness studies. Let us continue by considering the results.

a. Mental impairment (H 2.3)

Four investigations in the US related happiness to mental disturbance as measured by symptom inventories. Three of these were based on general population samples and one was among student teachers. Furthermore, an investigation in Canada related happiness to impairment-ratings made by a psychiatrist based on six years accumulated clinical information. All investigations found unhappy people to be more impaired than happy ones. The difference appeared to exist among males as well as among females, in all ages and in all social ranks. One of these investigations involved indicators of both 'overall happiness' and 'hedonic level'. It found the former somewhat less strongly linked to mental impairment than the latter.

Even greater differences appeared when people treated for mental illness (mental patients) were compared with control groups of 'normals'. Five investigations have made comparisons of this kind, one in Puerto Rico and four in the US. Two of these used indicators of both 'overall happiness' and 'hedonic level'. The differences in hedonic level again appeared greater than the differences in overall happiness.

b. Positive mental effectiveness (P 1.2)

Happiness has been related to various indicators of positive functioning as well. Happy people scored higher on the test of 'identity integrity', 'ego strength' and 'resolution'. This was shown in seven American investigations. Subjects were students, elderly persons and people in transition. Sizable positive relationships with all three happiness variants were found.

Happiness was also shown to be related to subjective evaluations of one's mental functioning. American students who characterize themselves as 'helpless' and 'discouraged' reported relatively low levels of both overall happiness and hedonic level. Current happiness also appeared negatively related to reminiscences of earlier inability to cope with problems. People who had at some time experienced a 'mental breakdown' turned out to be less happy than people who had not. This was shown by two investigations in the US and one in England. Likewise a study among adults in the Netherlands found less happiness among people who remembered 'not having been able to deal adequately with the death or divorce of their parents in their youth'.

c. **Psycho-social maturity (P 1.4)**

The process of successive mastery of developmental tasks is often seen as paving the way to later happiness (e.g. Havighurst & Albrecht, 1953:2). It is believed that developmental tasks are more or less similar for all humans; at least some basic ones. Several developmental theorists have tried to describe the main tasks involved. One such theorist is Ericson (1969). According to his theory, development involves the mastery of eight successive problems: (1) acquiring 'basic trust' in the first years of life, (2) overcoming infantile shame and doubt and thereby achieving 'autonomy' (3) coping with emerging feelings of guilt and thus freeing the way to 'initiative', (4) getting involved in 'realistic tasks', (5) developing a sense of 'identity' around the adolescence, (6) establishing 'relations with other people' in young adulthood and (8) coming to terms with oneself and thereby to death in the last stage of life (p. 239-261).

Two investigations among US college students showed that perceived success in the first six of these developmental tasks is indeed clearly related to hedonic level.

Two other American investigations related hedonic level to more global clinical ratings of psycho-social development; one to ratings of 'maturity' and 'integration', the other to a rating of 'self-actualization'. Both found positive relationships.

d. **Discussion**

Again we must guard against jumping to the conclusion that mental effectiveness makes for happiness. As in the foregoing section we must consider the possibility that the correlations are artefacts and that they reflect the effects of happiness on mental effectiveness.

Artefacts? There are several reasons why the correlations could be misleading.

Firstly, they could again be the result of parallel response bias. However, that can only be the case for correlations between happiness and 'self-ratings' of mental health. As we have seen, correlations are equally strong where 'expert-ratings' are concerned. Therefore this kind of bias is not likely .

Another possibility is that the indicators of mental effectiveness tapped superficial social adjustment rather than true capacities for adaptation. This is most likely where indicators of positive mental effectiveness are concerned (mentioned sub b and c), rather global and socially desirable traits being

involved there. However, such confusion is less likely to invalidate the mental impairment ratings (mentioned sub a), because these are based on specific symptoms, at least part of which are socially almost neutral. These latter indicators of mental effectiveness do not distinguish themselves by lower correlations with happiness than the former.

It is more likely that contamination played a role. Some indicators of psychological effectiveness approximate happiness very closely. Several questions in impairment inventories, for example, concern frequency of depressive affects. Some inventories even contain a question about the global appreciation of life. Probably happiness issues played a role in clinical assessments of mental effectiveness as well. It is therefore likely that most relationships were in fact somewhat less pronounced than the correlations suggest. At the same time it is unlikely that the correlations are wholly due to contamination, the bulk of items in the effectiveness scores referring to entirely different matters than happiness.

Finally there is the possibility that the correlations are spurious. Both happiness and mental effectiveness could for instance depend upon 'marital status' and hence coincide markedly, while they are in fact unrelated. 'Physical health' and 'social milieu' could also be responsible for a spurious correlation. As yet, only a few checks have been performed. It has been shown that the correlations remain after specification by 'gender', 'age' and 'social rank'; at least in the US. Obviously there are other variables that could be involved.

Does happiness affect mental effectiveness? As in the case of physical health, we must consider the possibility that the correlations are due to the effects of happiness on mental effectiveness. This time there are no empirical data that indicate the direction of causality. Yet we can imagine that it could affect mental effectiveness in at least four ways.

Firstly, unhappiness could foster defensive tendencies. People might tend to deny that they are dissatisfied with their life and could therefore be geared to the denial of various other problems as well. Below we will see that unhappy people are indeed more apt to resort to reality distortion than happy people. However, we will also see that the relationship is rather a complex one. (To be shown in section 7/2.2). Furthermore we must remember that the great majority of unhappy people tend to face their dissatisfaction with life rather realistically. (See section 3/1.1d).

Secondly, happiness can influence the development of various other components of mental effectiveness as well. Further on in this chapter we will see that a positive appreciation of life furthers 'activity' (section 7/1.4) and promotes notions of 'autonomy' (section 7/2.1), which both figure in current conceptions of 'positive mental health'.

Thirdly, we have seen that unhappiness may be detrimental to one's 'physical health' (Section 7/1.1c). Ill health not being conducive to mental effectiveness in the long run, unhappiness could harm it in this way as well.

Finally, mental effectiveness is not independent of living conditions. Mental impairments are more likely to develop where people live in hostile and unpredictable conditions; especially when such conditions prevail in the intimate environment during their youth. As we have seen in the preceding chapter, unhappiness can sometimes add to the chances of finding oneself in such unfavorable circumstances; for instance by hampering contacts in the realm of work and by burdening intimate ties. As such it can undermine the individuals' social basis, thereby exposing him to harming experiences. Possibly such a mechanism works even in the first formative years, cheerful babies eliciting more warmth and attention from their mothers than whiners. In section 8/1.1a we will meet some findings that can be interpreted accordingly.

Does mental effectiveness affect happiness? At the same time it is also evident that mentally effective people are likely to grasp more opportunities in their lives than ineffective ones. That is implied in the very definition of mental effectiveness. More specifically: mental effectiveness can be expected to foster several conditions that appeared to favor happiness.

Mental impairment is obviously a threat to several sources of happiness. Neurotic people are for example less likely to stay 'employed' and to earn a good 'income' (Demonstrated by e.g. Vaillant, 1980:3; the consequences on happiness were discussed in the sections 6/3.1 and 6/2.4 respectively). Neurotic people are also less likely to maintain satisfying 'intimate ties' (demonstrated by e.g. Kooy, 1957:183), which will be even more detrimental to their happiness (Relevance of intimate ties for happiness discussed in section 6/4). Mental impairments will also have obvious consequences for several of the individual characteristics discussed in this section. They are for instance likely to damage 'physical health' in the long run and thus to depress the appreciation of life as well (7/1.1). Furthermore they can sometimes reduce happiness by limiting 'activity' (7/1.3), by shattering 'control beliefs' (7/2.1), by encouraging dangerous 'lifestyles' (e.g. alcoholism) (7/3) and by

instigating the adoption of false and unrealistic 'longings' (7/4). Such effects are evidently not the same for all defects in all conditions. Some disturbances may even be profitable in some context, though one should guard against the exaggeration that only fools can be happy in present day society.

The same is true for aspects of positive mental effectiveness. These will generally contribute to happiness. Possibly the impact of traits such as 'autonomy' and 'ego-strength' is relatively greater in typically individualistic and competitive societies. Where the available data are restricted to contemporary western societies, this cannot be said with certainty.

7/1.3 SPECIFIC ABILITIES

The concept of 'general mental effectiveness' being broad and global, the remarks on its correspondence to happiness had to remain global as well. An inspection of the relationship between happiness and specific mental abilities might shed some light on the details involved. Not only can we see which abilities count most in which conditions, but we can also get a closer look at the ways in which they affect happiness. Yet we should not forget that 'general' mental effectiveness is probably more than the sum of separate proficiencies. Hence this line of inquiry can not tell the whole story.

Specific capacities have not been paid much attention in happiness research as yet. There are a few interesting studies on the relationship of happiness to 'social abilities' and some investigations on its relation to 'intelligence'. Furthermore one investigation has touched on the relationship between happiness and 'planning abilities'. Obviously there are a great many other capacities that might be relevant.

a. **Social abilities (P 1.8)**

Three investigations have related happiness to *expert ratings* of interpersonal capability. First a Canadian investigation had adult persons kept track of by a psychiatrist during a six year period. The psychiatrist rated the 'emotional openness to others' and the 'ability to secure emotional support'. These ratings appeared to be firmly related to self-reported hedonic level. The capacities involved are close to items that figured in the scores of 'positive mental effectiveness' discussed above in section 7/2b. The second study was

an American one among psychotherapists and focused on more surface skills. The behavior of these therapists was rated for 'warmth', 'empathy', 'genuineness', 'self-disclosure' and 'facilitation'. The ratings were made by three independent judges on the basis of audiotapes of individual therapy sessions. Again the scores turned out to be strongly related to self-reported hedonic level. Finally, the earlier mentioned investigation among English schoolboys and students in the 1910's involved ratings of some social skills. Schoolmasters and peers estimated the 'influence', 'tact' and 'kindness' of these subjects. These estimates appeared to correspond very closely with ratings of hedonic level, made by the same people.

Investigations using *selfratings* have yielded similar results. People who think they get along well with others, appeared to be happier than those who do not. This was observed in surveys in Israel, the Netherlands and in the US, as well as in two investigations among American students. Indicators of both 'overall happiness' and 'hedonic level' were involved. The associations these indicators yield tend to be equally strong.

It is again possible that these correlations are biased. As in the preceding cases the correlations with self-ratings can be inflated by parallel response bias. Such bias cannot be involved in the correlations with expert-ratings. However, these are likely to be affected by contamination. This is particularly likely to have occurred in the English investigation among schoolboys and students. The raters at work there are unlikely to have distinguished sufficiently strictly between manifestations of 'kindness' and inner 'cheerfulness' for example. Possibly the psychiatrist in the Canadian study distinguished them better, but there is no guarantee of that. The chance of contamination is still less in the American investigation among psychotherapists; ratings being made on the basis of audiotapes which are unlikely to give much away of the subjects' characteristic mood. As this latter study found quite strong correlations, contamination does not seem to have biased the other ones too much. Again there is also the possibility of spuriousness; for example both happiness and the social abilities involved could parallel only as far as they both depend on one and the same source, such as 'social milieu' or a personality trait such as 'irritability'. Where no checks have been carried out, such objections cannot be refuted.

Yet there are good reasons for assuming that at least part of the common variance is due to real causal interaction. Firstly, it is not unlikely that a positive appreciation of life benefits the development of social skills. Remember that cheerful people are generally more liked than depressed ones.

(Demonstrated in section 6/4d). They therefore have a better start and probably more opportunity for experiment. On the other hand they may feel less obliged to correct their interpersonal behavior. Secondly, social ability can obviously add to happiness, the foregoing chapter having shown that happiness depends heavily on 'intimate contacts'. (Remember section 6/4). It is evident that these abilities are quite crucial in this context. They can also increase the chances of earning a good 'income' (beneficial effects on happiness discussed in section 6/2.1), and of 'involvement in voluntary organizations' (beneficial effects on happiness discussed in section 6/3.2).

b. Intelligence (C 1.3)

Contrary to expectations clever people did not appear to be happier than dull ones. Several investigations among college students and high school pupils in England and the US failed at least to find any correlation between happiness and test-intelligence, either among males or among females. Nor did an investigation among elderly Americans find such a correlation. Investigations on this matter used indicators of hedonic level and of overall happiness. A lot of different intelligence tests have been involved.

The earlier mentioned investigation in England in the 1910's among schoolboys did not use tests, but ratings of 'quickness of apprehension' and 'profoundness of apprehension' made off-hand by the class master. These ratings appeared to be closely linked to hedonic level as estimated by these same class masters. Similar results were found in a parallel study among students, that used the estimates of trained peers. As observed on earlier occasions, these correlations are probably inflated by contamination, the ratings probably having overlapped to some extent.

One could expect intelligent people to be happier insofar as intelligence is a key to social success. Yet test-intelligence is no strong predictor of social success; it tends to predict success at school rather than in real life. Furthermore success in school is no sure ticket to happiness. As we have seen in section 6/2.2, happiness is currently largely unrelated to level of education in the modern western world. The investigations at hand come from these very nations. The situation may have been different in England in 1910. At the present time it may be different in non-western nations as well.

Though there is no correlation between present happiness and current test-intelligence, there does seem to be some correspondence between past happiness and (present) intelligence. The famous Berkeley Growth Study found a

sizable correlation between hedonic level at three years of age and tested intelligence in childhood and adolescence (Schaefer & Bailey, 1963:99/104).

As yet there are no data that allow a test of Hart's (1934) claim that people of genius are typically unhappy.

c. Knowledge (S 5.4)

An investigation among American high school boys found no greater 'knowledge about jobs' among the happy than among the unhappy. Obviously this does not imply that differences in knowledge never matter to happiness.

d. Planning ability (P 1.2)

In the earlier mentioned 6-year follow-up investigation among elderly persons in Canada, psychiatrists also rated the subject's 'ability to conceptualize goals and the instrumental tasks necessary to their accomplishment' as well as the 'ability to maintain a judicious balance among the various roles'. The rating appeared firmly related to hedonic level. Unfortunately it is not clear what abilities are actually involved here. Hence I refrain from comment. Let it suffice to mention that studies among American college students have found a positive correlation between happiness and an equally vague characteristic named 'time competence' (T 1.1). However, an investigation by myself in the Netherlands found no link between happiness and actual planning behavior. People with definite 'life goals' were not happier than people without them and happiness was also unrelated to 'clarity', 'diversity' and 'time span of goals' (Veenhoven, in preparation).

7/1.4 ACTIVITY LEVEL

Several investigations in western nations showed happy people to be more active than unhappy ones. The happy appeared more 'involved' in work and leisure activities and reported a more pronounced 'appetite' for activity. Yet they did not appear to feel more 'harassed' subjectively. The level of activity is obviously closely related to physical health and mental effectiveness. However, it is not the same. Healthy and effective people are not always active, while ailing and disturbed persons are sometimes surprisingly energetic.

a. Actual activity (A 1.1)

The first investigation to deal with this issue is the earlier mentioned study among English schoolboys and university students in 1912. The activity level of the schoolboys was rated by their teachers and that of the students by trained peers. Both physical and mental activities were estimated. These activity-ratings turned out to be highly related to hedonic level as rated by the same person. A similar procedure was followed in a later investigation among 8-months old infants in the US. The ratings were made by a visiting psychologist. Hedonic level appeared to be highly related to current activity, but it was unrelated to ratings of activity in the days right after the birth. The positive correlations found in these two studies may be due to contamination. It is not easy to distinguish fully between outward manifestations of hedonic level and activity. However, an investigation that does not have these defects yielded similar results. This investigation concerned adult cancer patients in the US. Activity level was assessed on the basis of a daily activity-inventory which was filled out by the respondents each day during the first four weeks of treatment. Hedonic level was assessed by means of a 52-item index of specific affects, administered twice a week. A similarly strong correspondence appeared.

Next, two studies related activity level to overall happiness. A US study found overall happiness positively related to the number of hours spent working, housekeeping, repairing, etc. during the most recent typical week. In the Netherlands the overall happiness of adults appeared positively related to a self-estimate of one's physical activity. In both cases the correlations were rather low.

Both overall happiness and hedonic level have been related to 'leisure activity'. The correlations were again positive and stronger in the case of hedonic level than in the case of overall happiness (Databook part III section L 3.3). These findings are reported in more detail in section 7/3a of this volume.

The greater activity of happy people is also reflected in their self-descriptions. Happy students in the US appeared more likely to characterize themselves as 'active' and 'productive' than their unhappy colleagues (Databook part III section S 2.2.1). We will meet these findings again in section 7/6.1.

A final thing to note is that a lot of gerontological investigations dealt with the link between 'morale' and 'activity'. A great part of this research concerned the so-called 'activity/disengagement' controversy. Unfortunately the indicators of 'morale' used in these studies do not meet my demands for

valid measurement of happiness. Hence their results are difficult to compare.

b. Appetite for activity

Happy people appeared to differ somewhat from unhappy ones with respect to their current affect states. One of the differences concerns the prevalence of feelings of energy'. The happy more often feel 'energetic' and the unhappy more often 'apathetic'. This was demonstrated in seven investigations: one in England, one in Puerto Rico and five in the US. One of the latter showed 'hedonic level' to be more closely related to the prevalence of such feelings than 'overall happiness' is (Databook part III section A 2.2.2).

There are also indications that happy people desire more activity. Two investigations among American students showed strong correlations with several indicators of 'sensation seeking'. The correspondence with hedonic level again turned out to be stronger than that with overall happiness (Databook part III section P 1.5.3). See also section 7/4c of this volume.

In the realm of values no such differences appeared. At any rate, happy American students did not distinguish themselves from the unhappy ones in their appreciation of values concerning 'excitement', 'mastery' and 'work' (Databook part III section V 1.1). See also section 7/5.1c of this book.

c. Feeling pressured (E 1.3)

Though the happy are typically more active than the unhappy, they do not tend to feel more overburdened. Three investigations among American students showed that the happy did not claim their academic tasks to be 'heavy' more often. As we will see in section 7/2.3d happy people do not report more 'time-pressure' either.

d. Discussion

When considering these findings I will again begin by considering their reality value and then take a look at the possible causal effects.

Artefacts? As far as self-ratings of activity are concerned there is again the possibility that the correlations are inflated by parallel response bias, some

people overrating their appreciation of life as well as their energy, whereas others underrate both. However, such bias cannot be involved in the two investigations that assessed activity by external ratings which found equally strong correlations. Unfortunately these latter studies may have been biased as well. As both 'cheerfulness' and 'activity' were rated by an other person (peers or teacher), the ratings may have overlapped somewhat, thus producing contaminated correlations. However, self-reported happiness has appeared to be equally strongly related to activity ratings by others.

Then there is again the possibility that the correlations are spurious. They could for instance be produced by the common linking of both variables to 'physical health'. In the above mentioned investigation among cancer patients in the US the correlation did indeed disappear when 'self perceived health' was checked. That does not imply, however, that all other correlations are spurious. What applies to this highly specific category, need not necessarily apply to other populations. Another possibility is that the correlations are due to a common variance with 'age'. However, age appeared to be unrelated to happiness. (Demonstrated in section 6/2.2). Obviously several other variables might be causing spurious correlations 'quality of work' and cultural 'lifestyle' differences for instance.

There are thus several reasons for doubting the validity of these correlations. Yet there are also good reasons for believing that they are not entirely artefactual. There is some experimental evidence that cheerfulness stimulates activity and one can easily imagine conditions in which activity increases one's appreciation of life.

Does happiness affect activity? Several experimental investigations in the US demonstrated that pleasant affect enhances activity. Since these experiments considered the effect of short term mood rather than of general hedonic level, they were not reported above. Yet in this context they are worth mentioning. I therefore summarized four of them in exhibit 7/1.4. The first two experiments in the exhibit show that pleasant affect stimulates activity and that negative affect slows it down. The results of the other two are probably due to this same effect: the elated subjects thinking more effectively and being more helpful because they are more energetic and alert.

This energizing effect of pleasant affect is probably part of the human motivational system, in which hedonic experience plays a signaling and amplifying role. Nature seems to have safeguarded the gratification of some essential bio-psychical needs by linking them to the feelings of like and

dislike. In this vein Arnold (1960:86) characterized hedonic experience as the intuitive appraisal that something is either good or bad for us; positive affects stimulating beneficial activities, while negative affects halt harmful ones. As such, affects would navigate the organism through life. However, hedonic level is obviously not an infallible compass. People may come to like things that are in fact bad for them and feelings of dislike can sometimes hit the brakes so hard that complete apathy results.

Exhibit 7/1.4

Positive affect as a stimulator of activity: some experimental evidence.

<i>source</i>	<i>experimental design</i>	<i>results</i>
Strickland, 1974	Different affective states were induced in three groups by reading resp. neutral, depressed and elated statements. Each group made some tests.	The 'elated' groups showed more expansive graphic expression and greater preference for activities of a social and physical nature than the 'depressed' group. Responses in the 'neutral' group fell between the 'elated' and the 'depressed' one.
Trimboli, 1972	Different affective states were induced in three groups by asking them to read silently and then aloud elated, neutral and depressed statements.	Induced 'elation' was followed by an increase in fundamental frequency in speech, while induced 'depression' gave rise to a decrease in vocal intensity and fundamental frequency of speech.
Hale, 1976	Ss then performed a same speech task.	
Isen & Levin, 1972	Ss read elated, depressed and neutral self-referent mood statements and then answered a number of questionnaires with cognitive contents.	Ss in the 'elated' mood performed better in cognitive tasks than in the 'depressed' moods.
	Positive affect was induced in one group by having them find a dime in the coin return of a public telephone. An other group served as a control. Both groups were then confronted with a confederate who seemingly by accident dropped papers in front of them.	'Rewarded' Ss more often spontaneously helped to pick up papers.

So much for the effect of the affective component of happiness on activity. Does the same apply to the cognitive one? Not obviously. Contentment has rather been associated with passivity; the expression 'contented cow' being a symbol of that view. There are indications that contentment is less conducive to activity than hedonic level. Remember that hedonic level corresponds more closely with activity than overall happiness. Yet this does not prove that contentment reduces activity.

Does activity add to happiness? Possibly the findings also reflect that high activity has a positive effect on the appreciation of life. There are no empirical indications for such effects, at least not insofar as current differences in activity are involved. There is evidence that extreme inactivity leads to depressed affect; for instance from the so-called 'sensory deprivation' experiments. It is also evident that extreme overactivity is generally experienced as unpleasant, at least when continued for a long time. However, the question is rather whether *modal* differences in daily activity affect happiness.

Active people could have some advantages over inactive ones; at least in some conditions and when it is not a matter of overreaching oneself. They are for example likely to be better off in achievement-oriented societies, where the distribution of socially controlled sources of happiness depends on the amount of effort invested. Active people could then be in the advantage in the contest for good jobs and therefore take more pleasure in life. (The effects of job-prestige and employment on happiness were discussed in respectively the sections 6/2.6 and 6/3.1). Possibly energy tends also to add to happiness by stimulating 'engagement in voluntary organizations' (effect on happiness discussed in section 6/3.2), by increasing the chances of establishing 'ties with a spouse or friends' (effects on happiness demonstrated in sections 6/4.1, 6/4.3) and by fostering 'control beliefs' (effects to be shown in section 7/2.1). Though such effects are possible, there is not yet any independent evidence that activity does indeed add to happiness.

7/1.5 RICHNESS OF MENTAL LIFE

Various early authors on happiness questioned whether 'simple' people can be equally happy as persons with 'developed' minds and tastes. Some expected the former to take most pleasure in life because they would be more 'pure', 'direct' and 'unspoilt'. Others maintained that the latter must be happier, the

variation involved in their more 'differentiated experience' providing more satisfaction in the long run. (Most defendants of this view also consider such experiences 'superior'). In fact there are two kinds of differences involved in such claims: socio-cultural differences in lifestyle, language and knowledge and - related but yet to be distinguished - differences in 'psychological differentiation'. Empirical happiness studies have dealt with differences of the latter kind only. Though nobody has investigated the matter systematically, there are nevertheless various stray observations that are relevant in this context. All these observations stem from investigations among western intellectuals, most of them studies among students.

a. Affective complexity

Among students in Britain and the US happiness appeared to be unrelated to two aspects of affective complexity: to 'mood differentiation' and to 'variability of affect'. Happiness appeared negatively linked to 'intensity of effect': though not consistently.

Mood differentiation (A 2.1.1). Two studies among American college students inspected whether the happy differ from the unhappy with respect to the diversity of affects they experienced through day and time. Various aspects of affective experience were considered, but no correlations with happiness appeared. At best there were slight indications of a positive relationship among females and a negative one among males.

Variability (A 2.1.4). Affective experience may vary in several aspects. Aspects of variation that have been related to happiness are 'variability in hedonic tone', 'variability in prevalence of specific affects', 'variation in intensity of affects' and 'self-perceived general mood variability'.

Variability in hedonic tone. Five investigations related happiness to the pronouncedness of changes between pleasant and unpleasant affect. It appeared that people who report relatively many changes *within the day* tend to report somewhat higher average hedonic levels. This was at least suggested by three self-report studies among American students. An investigation among English students which used peer-ratings found a slight negative relationship. Students characterized by a great *day to day* variation in hedonic states tended to

report lower average levels. However, none of the investigations found the difference statistically significant.

Variability in prevalence of specific affects. People vary not only in the degree to which pleasant and unpleasant states alternate, but also in the degree to which changes occur in the dominance of specific affects, for instance: changes in the degrees to which 'anger' and 'restlessness' prevail over feelings of 'love' and 'calmness'. The correspondence of happiness to this kind of affective variability has been investigated but once. Variability in each of the thirteen affects that figure in the Wessman & Ricks' 'Personal Feelings Scale' appeared to be unrelated to hedonic level.

Variation in intensity of affects. An early investigation among English intellectuals assessed the relationship of hedonic level to variation in intensity of affects during 30 days. It found negative correlations, but did not report levels of significance. While only nine subjects were involved, the results can quite well be due to chance variation.

Self-perceived general mood variability. Finally one investigation among American students related happiness to scores on a questionnaire dealing with self-perceived mood fluctuation. These scores turned out to be unrelated to 'overall happiness' but negatively linked with 'hedonic level'.

Intensity of affect (A 2.1.3). Four investigations looked at the relationship between happiness and intensity of affect. One excepted, these found negative correlations. Firstly, an investigation among female intellectuals in the US found a negative correlation between 'level of emotion' and overall happiness. Secondly, the above mentioned investigation among English intellectuals found hedonic level negatively related to 'intensity' of feelings. Both the respondents who had reported the most intense pleasurable experiences and the most unpleasant ones scored relatively low on average hedonic level. A similar result was found among Dutch secondary school pupils. However, among junior college students in the US, 'shallowness of affect' appeared to be unrelated to both overall happiness and hedonic level.

b. Cognitive complexity (C 1.1, C 1.2, C 1.4)

An investigation among American students inspected whether the happy

differ from the unhappy by having a more differentiated picture of reality, using relatively wide ranging and articulated conceptual categories. Seven tests of 'conceptual differentiation' were involved. Neither overall happiness nor hedonic level appeared to be related to scores on either of these (C 1.1). The same investigation also considered differences in 'field-independence' It found slight positive correlations with both overall happiness and hedonic level, happy people doing better on several 'hidden figure tests' (though not on all significantly better) (C 1.2). This investigation also related happiness to perceptual 'rigidity'. Scores on each of the rigidity tests it used correlated negatively (but not significantly) to overall happiness. One was found strongly negatively related to hedonic level as well, but two other tests, showed slight positive correlations (C 1.4). In this context it is worth remembering that happiness was found unrelated to 'intelligence' (section 7.1.1.3b).

c. Discussion

The differences at hand here are part of what Witkin et al. (1974:101) referred to as 'psychological differentiation'. Witkin's studies suggest that affective complexity and perceptual articulation are manifestations of a more pervasive psychological phenomenon which also involves a relatively strong 'sense of identity' and a pronounced 'impulse control'. If this is the case, the data do not suggest that this characteristic matters much to the appreciation of life. Yet again we must guard against jumping to conclusions.

Firstly it is important to realize that the reality value of these findings has not yet been examined; in particular not the possibility that true correlation is suppressed by spurious effects. Secondly effects *of* happiness can be involved. Unhappiness could for instance sharpen experience. Some poets have suggested that it is therefore superior to contentment. If existent, such an effect could counterbalance an otherwise positive contribution of psychological differentiation *on* happiness.

Thirdly, non-differences do not imply that the characteristics concerned are entirely irrelevant for the appreciation of life. They may have their pros and cons which outweigh each other statistically; at least in the populations concerned here. In this context it is worth realizing that the data all come from academic circles in western nations. The balance may tip in one direction or another in different populations.

Another thing to keep in mind is that all investigations focused on linear relationships. In fact all of them used product-moment correlations. As such

they overlooked the possibility that curvilinear relationships exist, for instance that moderately differentiated people are the happier, rather than the most differentiated ones.

7/2 HAPPINESS AND SOME PERSONALITY TRAITS

When using the term 'personality' I refer to more or less stable patterns of reaction that influence behavior throughout a variety of conditions. In fact we have already dealt with personality traits in the earlier discussion on 'mental effectiveness', 'activity level' and 'psychological differentiation'. This section will consider the relationship of happiness to four further traits which have less obvious implications for success in coping: to 'control beliefs' (7/2.1); to characteristic 'ways of evading threatening information' (7/2.2); to 'tendencies to like things' (7/2.3); and finally to 'time orientations' (7/2.4).

Most traits considered in these sections are unlikely to be linearly related to happiness. If any relationship exists at all, curvilinear ones are the most likely, extreme positive and negative tendencies probably being detrimental to adaptation in most conditions and thus affecting happiness negatively. Such curvilinear relations do not appear in correlation-coefficients. They can be recognized by inspecting frequency distributions or by linearity tests. Unfortunately most investigations failed to do this.

7/2.1 PERCEIVED FATE CONTROL (P 1.1)

Not all people are equally apt to believe that they can affect their lot. Some believe that their life is largely in the hands of the 'powerful', or that fate is determined by 'bad or good luck', while others perceive events as largely contingent to their own efforts and characteristics. The former orientation is currently labeled 'external control belief' and the latter 'belief in internal control' (Rotter, 1966:1). Ten investigations inspected whether differences of this kind correspond with differences in happiness. All these investigations are American ones. Two were based on probability samples in local populations. The remaining studies used non-probability samples: three among students, one among married females and one among high school pupils.

Findings

All these investigations found happiness to be positively related to perceived fate control. The more a person believed himself to be in control of his lot, the higher the reported level of overall happiness, hedonic level and contentment. Of the three happiness variants 'hedonic level' appeared to be most closely related to perceived fate control.

Some investigations specified the relationship. One among people of 46 years and older found the relation with overall happiness unaffected by 'age' and 'gender'. However, a study among students found a stronger relationship with hedonic level among males than among females. Furthermore Queen & Freitag (1978) showed that overall happiness is more closely related to perceived fate control among aged people who live in the restricted setting of a nursing home than among people of the same age who live on their own.

Two experimental investigations have been performed; both among institutionalized elderly adults in the US. In one of these (Langner & Rodin, 1976) nursing home residents were brought together in the lounge on their floor of the home to hear a communication delivered by the nursing home director. These residents were told that they were capable of making, and should be making, all the decisions that they used to make for themselves. They were then given decisions to make and could choose a plant to take care of - something for which they would be responsible. Another group of residents of that home also gathered in their lounge and received a different kind of message from the director. For this group emphasis was laid on the staffs eagerness to take care of them and help them. They too were given plants, but were told that the nurses would water and care for them. Both groups were virtually identical with respect to socio-economic variables and pre-treatment measures of physical and mental health. Three weeks later the responsibility-encouraged group showed significant improvement over the comparison group in hedonic level; both in self-ratings and in staff-ratings. (The experimental group also improved in alertness and active participation. A follow-up after 18 months found that half as many had died in this group and that the survivors were significantly superior on measures of physical and mental health. Rodin & Langner, 1977). The other experimental investigation is the one by Schulz (1976) which was already mentioned in section 6/4.3d. It showed a slight increase in 'morale' of isolated elderly people, when these were visited regularly during some months. This increase was most pronounced in the subjects who were given the opportunity to decide when they would

be visited. Remember that the 'morale' indicator used in this investigation did not quite meet my demands for the valid measurement of happiness.

Discussion

The positive correlations do not guarantee that a condition of happiness is identified. We must once more inspect whether we are dealing with an artefact or not, and whether reversed causality is involved.

Artefact? It is again possible that the correlations were enlarged by parallel response bias. Yet the experimental studies do not suggest that such bias can be held responsible for all the common variance. It is not likely either that the results are due to contamination. The indicators of fate-control used did not involve happiness-like items.

There are good reasons for expecting that the correlations are at least partly spurious. Perceived fate control has been shown to be related to several personal characteristics, to which happiness is related as well: among other things to aspects of 'mental effectiveness' (Kuypers, 1971:39); to 'activity level' (Queen & Freitag, 1978:71); to 'anxiety' (Phares, 1976:121) and to 'self-respect' (Reid et al., 1977). Up to now we are left in the dark as to how much common variance remains when these variables are specified. Once more the experimental investigations do not suggest that the results are entirely artefactual.

Does happiness affect fate-control belief? If a statistical relationship did remain, this would not necessarily imply that fate-control favors happiness. The reverse could also be the case. One could imagine that unhappy people face more misfortune than happy ones and thus become less inclined to believe that their efforts can influence matters. Again the experimental investigations render it unlikely that such effects are responsible for all the variance.

Does perceived fate-control affect happiness? The experimental investigations leave no doubt that fate control belief can affect hedonic level. Yet it is not established that it does so in populations other than institutionalized elderly. Anyway there are plausible arguments for expecting that internal control belief affects happiness positively and that external control belief works negatively. Control belief influences the degree to which one's resources are

actually mobilized. As such it adds to the chance that the individual will succeed in mastering the various challenges on his way. This applies at least to competent individuals. Utterly incompetent individuals may be better off by thinking that their efforts do not matter.

The idea that one is in control of one's fate can furthermore be a source of satisfaction in itself. It adds to the sense of 'security' and to 'self-respect'. However, it is obvious that the belief in internal control does not always work positively. Failure, for instance, is more damaging to one's self-respect if one perceives it to be contingent on one's own behavior.

Possibly, internal control belief also contributes to happiness by providing the individual with the comforting notion that he can choose to leave unsatisfying living conditions. This is at least suggested by the above mentioned finding that happiness is most strongly related to perceived fate control among the aged people, who are in fact most dependent on others.

The two experimental investigations qualify 'activity', 'health' and 'mental effectiveness' as potential links in the causal chain between control belief and happiness. Langner (1982) emphasized that believing oneself not to be in control of one's situation tends to reduce mental activity in the long run ('mindlessness'), thereby setting in a process of decay of mental and physical resources.

As yet it is unclear whether these American findings apply equally well in other cultures.

7/2.2 DEFENSIVE STRATEGIES (P 1.3)

All people tend to protect themselves from threatening information by the unconscious distortion of their perceptions. However, people are not all equally inclined to do so, nor does everyone deceive himself in the same way. Three investigations inspected whether such differences in defensiveness are linked with differences in happiness; all these were carried out among male college students in the US. Two assessed defensive tendencies by means of questionnaires, while one worked with rank-orders based on intensive clinical observation during several years. Some of the findings have already been mentioned in the earlier discussion on defensive distortion in answers to happiness questions in section 3/1.1d.

Findings

Contrary to expectation, happy students did not always appear less inclined to deceive themselves. The use of some defensive strategies even appeared more frequently among happy students than among unhappy ones and there were also defenses that turned out to be equally frequent in both categories. Only a few appeared more frequently among the unhappy indeed.

The most striking finding is that students of high hedonic level appeared relatively inclined to defensive 'reversal' and to 'intellectualization'. Hedonic level was also positively (but not significantly) linked to 'concealment of emotion'. It was found unrelated to several indicators of 'repression'. Overall happiness was not related to repression either. Current expectation was confirmed in the case of 'turning against others'; this tendency being most pronounced among students of low hedonic level. Hedonic level was also found negatively related (but not significantly) to 'turning against oneself and to defensive 'projection'.

Discussion

These findings are intriguing; they seem to contradict my earlier remark that defensiveness is detrimental to happiness in the long run and suggest that things depend rather on how one deceives oneself. Before considering these issues in detail, we must first ascertain that there are no artefacts involved here and take a look at the various causal effects that might be at work.

Artefacts? The differences can possibly stem from parallel response bias. Subjects that tended to socially desirable answers to questions about hedonic level may also have responded positively to items on 'reversal' and 'intellectualization', all responses being geared by normative pressures to 'keep smiling'. For similar reasons these people could have responded negatively to the items on 'turning against others' 'turning against self and 'projection'. This reasoning explains less well why there was no difference with respect to 'repression'.

It is not impossible either that some correlations are spurious. It is for example possible that the negative correlation between happiness and 'turning against self is due to the fact that unhappy people have less self-respect (to be demonstrated in section 7/6.1b) and are hence more apt to blame themselves. Unfortunately the data have not been checked for this.

Does happiness foster defensiveness? Defenses are evoked by confrontation with threatening information. Awareness of unhappiness is typically a threatening piece of information. Latent unhappiness can therefore trigger or accelerate the development of defensive tendencies. However, such effects are unlikely to show in a correlation between happiness and defensiveness. If effective, the defenses must give rise to optimistic or at least neutral responses to questions about happiness and hence produce positive or zero correlations. As we have seen this is not always the case. Hence this mechanism can at best have played a modest role.

Does effectiveness not hamper happiness? Earlier in this chapter I remarked that self-deceit involves a reduction of reality command and is therefore likely to hamper happiness in the long run. Yet this is only one side of the coin. In some conditions self-deceit can actually contribute to reality command to some extent. When the truth is too painful to bear it can at least protect the individual from inner confusion and prevent him from losing control altogether. See Bowman (1955:395) for an elaboration of this view.

The comforts of self-deceit are most apparent in the short run, its cost not being felt until later. Among the subjects concerned in these studies the long-term costs may not yet have presented themselves to their full extent. Remember that the investigations were among students who are still young and probably not yet burdened by the earlier self-deceit. At the same time the costs of realism are probably more painfully felt, these youngsters being relatively vulnerable for assaults on their freshly established identities. The ones who were courageous enough to face reality probably had to pay for it, which depressed their current hedonic level as much as the first payment of self-deceit made by their less courageous colleagues. In the long run the balance will probably swing to their advantage.

Why do some defensive strategies relate differently to happiness than others? Then the issue of why happy and unhappy students differ so much in the defensive strategies they use. As we have seen, happy students appeared more apt to 'reversal' and 'intellectualization', while unhappy ones tended to 'turn against others', to 'turn against self and to 'projection'. The happy and the unhappy did not differ in their inclination, to 'repress' threatening information. I can think of two reasons for these differences: firstly that the perceptual tendencies involved can affect the evaluations of life differently and secondly that not all have equally harmful behavioral consequences.

By its very nature 'reversal' is most likely to influence happiness positively:

it turns negative experiences into positive appreciations. In the investigation concerned this tendency was measured as the tendency 'to respond in a positive or neutral fashion to frustration'. As such it represents a way of keeping up morale without losing too much contact with the external reality. The distortion occurs largely at the level of appreciation; pain is denied, not the problem. 'Intellectualization' also involves the denial of negative affects rather than the distortion of the external reality. Though denial of internal signals has its risks as well, it is nevertheless comprehensible that the use of these strategies contributes to the enjoyment of life; at least to the conscious appreciation of the same.

The real-life consequences of the other defensive strategies are probably greater. All involve a losing of one's grip on external reality and are likely to have harmful side-effects. 'Turning against others' and 'projection' are likely to damage contacts with other people; especially contacts with intimates, which have been shown to be so crucial to happiness. (Remember section 6/4). 'Turning against self' is detrimental to self respect, which is quite important for happiness as well. (To be demonstrated in section 7/6.1). Consequently it is understandable that the use of these strategies is detrimental to happiness in the long run.

7/2.3 TENDENCY TO LIKE THINGS (P 1.6)

Apart from variation in liability perceptual distortion there could be differences in genuine inclination to see things positively. Some people are liable to pick up positive signals, while others focus on the black sides. If differences of this kind do indeed exist, they are likely to influence the appreciation of life: an optimist seeing more good things in the same living conditions than a splenetic. In this vein Lieberman (1970:74) has remarked that "... at some point in life, before the age of 18, an individual acquires an orientation to satisfaction. He becomes geared to a certain level of satisfaction which, within a broad range of circumstances, he maintains throughout life". Several investigations have dealt with this matter. Because their methods deviate somewhat from the correlational studies discussed so far, I will present the findings in more detail.

Factor-analytic studies. Several survey studies demonstrated the existence of a so-called 'general satisfaction factor' which represents the common variance

of responses to various questions on satisfaction with different aspects of life, such as with 'marriage', 'work' and 'housing'. The common variance of these domains satisfactions is typically about 10 percent. This factor appeared to be closely related to overall happiness and to several central personality factors, such as 'neurotism', 'stability' and 'orientations towards other people and society'. It was also found related to 'absence of traumatic experiences in youth' and to 'pleasant recollections of the past'. Strangely enough, it turned out to be largely unrelated to actual living conditions as reflected in such things as 'income' and 'social rank'. See e.g. Gadourek (1963:220) and Pommer & Van Praag (1978:46). This statistical factor was interpreted as a 'tendency to appreciate things', the development of which had been fostered by positive experiences in early youth. However, it can in fact represent various other personality traits as well. Relatively 'competent' people are for example likely to express more satisfaction with all aspects of life, not because of a rosier outlook, but because they are able to make more of their life.

Laboratory studies. Early American psychologists presented more convincing evidence for the existence of an inclination to see things either positively or negatively. They demonstrated that some people distinguish themselves by consistent positive or negative reactions to various neutral stimuli. All used female college students as subjects.

The first investigator in this tradition was Baxter et al. (1917). His procedure was simple: he began by mentioning several neutral stimulus words to his subjects. The subjects were instructed to rap on a table as soon as they could associate a word with an earlier unpleasant experience. The time between the administration of the stimulus and the rap on the table was measured. Next the subjects were given another set of words, now with the instruction to recall a pleasant experience. The time required to respond was measured again. In order to ensure that a stable characteristic was measured Baxter repeated this test several times. It appeared that about 15 percent of the respondents recalled unpleasant things more quickly than pleasant ones and that another 15 percent remembered positive experiences more promptly. Most respondents remembered pleasant experiences as fast as unpleasant ones. These findings were compared with the general hedonic level of these subjects as perceived by peers. It turned out that subjects of low hedonic level were overrepresented among the ones who had remembered unpleasant experiences more promptly, while typically cheerful subjects were over-represented in the category that had more quickly recalled pleasant things.

A variant of this procedure was followed by Morgan et al. (1919) and by

Washburn et al. (1925, 1926). These investigators asked their subjects to rate the 'pleasantness' of ideas they associated with neutral stimulus words. Again several subjects could be identified as apt to respond in a consistently positive way or in a characteristically negative fashion, and again these categories appeared to differ in general hedonic level.

Still another variant of this experiment was reported by Young (1937) Young simply asked his subjects to write down 'pleasing' and 'displeasing' words. The numbers of pleasing and displeasing words were counted and a ratio computed. These ratios appeared to be moderately constant throughout different tests. As expected, subjects who mentioned more displeasing words rated their characteristic mood relatively low.

Though consistent, the result of these experiments must not be overemphasized. The tendency to react either positively or negatively was found in less than half of the subjects. Even in this select group of 'optimists' and 'pessimists' differences in hedonic level were modest. These differences can moreover not be taken as a definite proof of the claim that a tendency to see things from the bright side makes for happiness. They may as well mean that happiness makes people see things rosier. There is in fact solid experimental evidence that mood influences perception in particular memories. Subjects, induced to feel elated, report typically more pleasant memories than randomly chosen subjects, or people were made to feel depressed (among others: Snyder & White, 1982). The results can also be due to the fact that currently happy people simply have more pleasant reminiscences because they were already happier before. The prevalence of happy memories could not only evoke the prompter recall of pleasant experiences, but also the greater tendency to associate neutral words with pleasant notions.

There is one investigation in which this latter bias cannot be involved. This investigation was also performed by Young (1937). He gave his subject 13 different odors to smell and one odorless control. He asked his subjects to rate their appreciation of these smells. On the basis of the responses he computed an average 'liking score'. He repeated that test 14 consecutive days, varying the order of representation each day. The liking scores were highly consistent in all tests. Then these 'likings scores' were related to self-ratings of general hedonic level. This time the phenomenon appeared unrelated: r was .02.

Together these findings do not suggest that hedonic level is greatly influenced by a general tendency to appreciate things, at least not among female American students. Possibly such effects exist among other categories; in particular

among some 'non-normal' populations such as manic-depressives. It is also possible that there is not only one broad tendency to react either positively or negatively, but rather more specific inclinations linked with special matters. A tendency to appreciate smells would then be irrelevant to happiness, while a distinct tendency to pick up comforting information can add to it. Possibly the experiments have not covered the dispositions which play a role in the complex process of evaluating one's life-as-a-whole.

It is not impossible either that the tendency to see things positively is of more importance for appraisals of 'contentment' than for hedonic level. Contentment being the degree to which aspirations are perceived to be realized, it is in fact quite likely to be influenced by perceptual tendencies. Perceptions of success depend heavily on interpretations and on rather vague standards of comparison. On the other hand, hedonic level is more a matter of 'raw' internal signals reflecting the gratification of less easily adjustable bio-psychical needs. As such it is less likely to be dependent on whether one sees life through rose-colored glasses or dark ones. One could even imagine that too rosy an outlook could affect hedonic level negatively. Failing to observe shortcomings in one's living-conditions can lead to deprivation at the level of basic needs and hence to unpleasant affects, while at the level of conscious evaluation contentment still prevails.

In this context it must be emphasized that the above mentioned experiments have all dealt with 'hedonic level'. More pronounced correlations might have appeared if the relation with 'contentment' or 'overall happiness' had been considered.

7/2.4 TIME ORIENTATION (T 1)

Another respect in which some people differ from others is their orientation towards time. There are in fact several differences involved here: among other things differences in how far one 'thinks back and ahead' and differences in 'organization' of time. Authors such as Frank (1939) and Lewin (1942) linked such differences with mental effectiveness. Their suggestions inspired several investigators to examine the relationship between time orientation and happiness. Most investigations on this matter were performed among students. Recently the issue figured in investigations among other categories as well.

a. Time-extension (T 1.2)

An early investigation among English students found hedonic level unrelated to peer-ratings of the degree to which they 'live with distant objects in view' (as opposed to living from hand-to-mouth). On the other hand an investigation among American students found a positive relationship between hedonic level and 'time-extension' as assessed by a 'Thematic Appreciation Test'. The stories cheerful students wrote extended farther both into the future and the past than the ones written by depressed students. An investigation among Americans at different life-stages found a similar relation among elderly respondents. The happy ones (both overall happiness and hedonic level) covered more future years when asked to estimate their happiness expectations on the 'Life-Evaluation-Chart'. (Shown in exhibit 4/1b on p.74). However, among young adults no such relationship appeared to exist (Lowenthal et al., 1975:137). Likewise an American investigation that dealt with elderly persons exclusively found no correspondence between overall happiness and 'future-extension' as measured by the 'Temporal Structure Scale' (Levy, 1978:197).

Much of this research was instigated by the idea that happiness is favored by time-extension, a long time perspective being a necessary basis for delay of impulse gratification and endurance of temporary frustration. The expectation that happiness and mental health favor time-extension played a role as well. See for example Lessing (1968:184). It is evident that neither of these notions is consistently sustained by the data. No doubt the apparent contradictions are partly due to the fact that rather different indicators of time-extension were involved. Yet a more basic reason seems that the relationship between happiness and time-extension is probably curvilinear rather than linear. When expressed in statistical measures of associations that assume linearity, it can easily turn out to be slightly positive or negative, or disappear altogether. The existence of a curvilinear relationship was in fact suggested by Lewin (1942:121), when he observed that inability to cope realistically with the demands of life can cause either a rigid restriction of awareness to the immediate, or a flight into the far away future or in the past. Seen in this light happy people are more likely to be characterized by some optimal time-extension rather than by a maximal one. Such optima are likely to differ across categories and circumstances. Hence more sophisticated investigations will probably yield rather different results.

b. Emphasis on the 'past', the 'present' or the 'future'

The above mentioned investigation among people at different life-stages in the US found happy people more apt to dwell in the future when day-dreaming, while the unhappy rather tended to dwell on past events. Among young respondents no such difference appeared. However, a similar result did appear in a study among American students: generally cheerful students being more apt to contemplate the future than depressed ones. Hedonic level was unrelated to thinking about the past among these students and negatively related to thinking often about the present (Cameron et al., 1977/78:239).

It is again unrealistic to expect a simple linear relation between happiness and temporal emphasis. Future-orientation may facilitate coping in some conditions, but it can sometimes be detrimental, actually resulting from or in an inability to face present problems (Fraisie, 1963). Similarly, reflection on one's past can sometimes have the beneficial effects stressed by Butler (1963), but it is also evident that preoccupation with time past is sometimes pathological in its origin and consequences. Brown's (1959:93) claim that happiness is favored by 'living in the here-and-now' is not well considered either. Once again happy people are more likely to be in-between these extremes. It is again probable that the optimal orientation is not the same for all persons in all conditions.

c. Organization of time (T 1.1)

An investigation among American college students revealed that students who feel generally pleasant respond differently to various questions about the structuring of time than the ones who usually feel depressed. The former reported more 'commitments and plans' for the future and 'scheduled' their time farther in advance. Also they more often described themselves as 'punctual' and 'efficient'. Interest in 'daily schedule' as such did not appear more pronounced in this category, but reports of 'problems with the organization' of time were more frequent among the depressed.

In my earlier mentioned investigation in the Netherlands I also found more planfulness among happy students. They reported more 'life goals' on a series of open-ended questions about their future. However, among all other subjects happiness appeared slightly negatively related to reports of life goals; even among people of the same age who were not involved in an academic study. The results were similar for all three happiness variants (Veenhoven, in preparation).

Happiness has also been found to be linked to the perceived 'continuity of time'. The above mentioned American investigation showed that cheerful students were more apt to report 'enduring themes' in their lives, while the depressed ones tended to refer to time as 'chopped up' and 'without direction'. In my study I found the latter attitude negatively related to all three happiness variants.

d. Time-pressure (T 1.1)

A too harried pace of life has been depicted as a major threat to the happiness of modern western people; e.g. by Linder, (1970:25/26). However, the above mentioned investigation among American students found the ones that felt most harassed not to be the least happy; the variables appeared in fact unrelated. My investigation in the Netherlands found no relation with any of the three happiness variants either. One could again assume that we are dealing with a curvilinear relationship, unhappy people having either too much or too little to do and the happy ones being situated in between. Hence I inspected the frequency distributions. The expectation was not confirmed, however. (Veenhoven, in preparation).

e. Speed of passage of time

Finally, happiness has been related to the perceived rate of the passage of time. Happy elderly Americans tended to characterize time as passing quickly more often than unhappy ones (Levy, 1978:197). Possibly this statistical difference is due to the common variance of these factors with the 'activity level'.

f. Discussion

None of these correlations is beyond doubt. All can in fact be spurious; time orientation being linked with things that really matter for happiness, such as 'education', 'occupation', 'loneliness', 'health' and 'mental effectiveness'. No checks having been performed as yet, nothing can be said with certainty.

Inssofar as they are not spurious, the correlations can obviously be due to

effects of happiness. A positive appreciation of life could widen one's time horizon, could intensify awareness of the present and could stimulate activity so much that time becomes scarcer and the organization thereof more necessary. Again, there is not any independent evidence for such effects.

Some potential consequences of differences in time-orientation on happiness were noted in passing. None of these has been proven true either.

7/3 HAPPINESS AND LIFESTYLE (L 3)

Various popular books on happiness suggest that life becomes more rewarding if one lives according to specific rules. Until recently western books of that kind used to stress ascetic living; 'getting up early', 'working hard', 'living in a sober manner', etc. Recently the tide has turned. Trendy books advise variety and enjoyment. Though the dishes have changed, the belief in recipes has remained.

These ideas all suggest that the enjoyment of life depends to some extent on 'lifestyles'; more or less voluntarily chosen patterns of daily behavior which have become habitual. The relation between happiness and lifestyles has not been investigated systematically as yet. However, there are various stray findings that are relevant in this context. Together these findings do not suggest that an ascetic way of life is more rewarding than a pleasure oriented one. There is in fact no convincing evidence for the superiority of any lifestyle so far.

a. The use of leisure time (L 3.3)

Ascetic moralists are reluctant to believe that 'leisure' can contribute to happiness; remember Armstrong (1973:472) quoted in the introduction to section 6/3.1. Yet leisure activity appears to be more closely related to happiness than work activity; at least in modern western nations. Sizable relationships were observed between happiness and involvement in specific leisure activities.

Leisure activity-level (L 3.3.1; S 6). Several investigations found people who spend a lot of time on 'hobbies', 'visits' and 'entertainment' to be generally

happier than those who do not. Three categories of subjects have been involved.

Firstly the matter was investigated among probability samples of adults in Canada, the Netherlands and the US. The latter two found overall happiness positively related to 'general leisure activity-level'. The first one found a positive relationship between hedonic level and 'engagement in hobbies' (measured by number and skill level).

Secondly there is an investigation among white US males who had experienced a first heart attack. It found more overall happiness among the ones who spend most hours with 'non-associational leisure activities'.

Thirdly there are three investigations among students and high school pupils in England and the US. An investigation among American high school pupils related both overall happiness and hedonic level to 'extra-curricular activity'. Again positive relationships were found. The correlation between hedonic level and activity appeared somewhat stronger than the one between activity and overall happiness. Surprisingly, positive correlations appeared to exist only among youngsters of upper and middle class families. The relationship was negative among lower class pupils. The earlier mentioned investigation among English schoolboys and male students also established strong positive correlations between hedonic level and leisure activity. On the other hand overall happiness appeared to be unrelated to 'non-required campus activity' among American female students.

Specific leisure activities. Happy people distinguished themselves by a greater involvement in almost all kinds of leisure activity. The differences appeared largest where 'going out' and 'sport' were concerned. Happy people were found to spend slightly more time 'reading' and 'listening to the radio'. However, they did not 'watch TV' more often than the unhappy. In this context it is worth remembering that happiness was found highly related to 'participation in voluntary organizations' and to 'frequency of contacts with friends'. See sections 6/3.2 and 6/4.3a respectively.

Change in leisure activity. Three investigations studied the relation of happiness to changes in leisure activity; one in England and two in the US. It appeared that people who claim to have engaged in new activities (met new people, gone to new places, taken up new hobbies) report higher hedonic level than people who did not. Doing more of the same (more reading, more television watching, more radio listening) appeared to be less pronouncedly

related to hedonic level. None of these investigations considered the relation with overall happiness.

The results are typically in line with the earlier mentioned finding that happiness is closely related to 'activity level' (Section 7/1.4). No better data being available, the conclusions must be the same: the correlations can be spurious, and as far as they are not, they can result both from effects of happiness on activity and effects of activity *on* happiness.

b. Consumption patterns (L 3.1)

Consumption patterns may affect one's physical health. Ill-balanced diets and the use of dangerous drugs are at least detrimental to it in the long run. Through their influence on physical health, consumption patterns could possibly influence happiness; happiness being partly dependent on health. Consumption habits may exert more direct effects on happiness as well: the use of drugs in particular could induce pleasant affects and could thereby raise hedonic level artificially (If not counterbalanced by hangover effects). According to some health-food apostles eating habits could exert direct effects as well: the eating of meat, for instance, intoxicating the consumer with the negative emotions felt by the animal when slaughtered. Several investigations in the Netherlands and the US tried to establish whether there are actually such differences between happy and unhappy people.

Eating habits. In the Netherlands there was no correspondence between overall happiness and the amount of milk products, meat, sugar, fat and fruits consumed daily. This result does not mean that eating habits never affect happiness. Extremely one-sided diets probably do; at least in the long run, because they undermine physical health. It means rather that the current differences in this prosperous country do not play a significant role.

Smoking and drinking. No conclusive evidence was provided either for the belief that happiness is depressed by smoking and drinking. Giving in to these habits appeared unrelated to all three variants of happiness, both in the Netherlands and the US. However, people who feel they have a 'drinking problem' were clearly less happy: they were less 'contented' than average and reported lower levels of 'overall happiness'.

Use of drugs. The relationship of happiness to the use of various other drugs was investigated in one small study among college students in the US in 1970. The use of barbiturates and marijuana appeared negatively related to overall happiness, but unrelated to hedonic level. Amphetamine usage was not related to either of these happiness variants.

In all these cases spuriousness might be involved, consumption habits being linked with various factors that influence happiness: for example 'social milieu', 'marital status', 'health' and 'mental maturity'. Effects *of* happiness can be involved as well: in particular where drinking and drug use are concerned. Some effects *on* happiness were already touched on. Again the data do not allow a check on any of these explanations.

c. **Sleeping habits (L 3.2)**

Four investigations related happiness to the amount of sleep one usually gets. Three of these were performed in the US and one in the Netherlands. None found significant differences. At best there are some indications that people who generally sleep more than 8,5 hours feel less pleasant than average. This difference appeared to be partly a matter of 'age'. Possibly differences in 'physical health' are involved as well.

Hedonic level has also been related to the hour at which one goes to bed. People who go to bed late were shown to feel somewhat more pleasant than the ones who go to bed early. This was at least so in a local American sample in 1930.

Again the findings are not beyond doubt and the direction of causality has not yet been established.

d. **Ascetic versus hedonic living**

Finally some earlier mentioned findings which are relevant in the context of the claim that ascetic living adds to happiness.

A hardworking life. Traditional moralists depict happiness as the fruit of hard work. However, the facts provide little support for that view. As we have seen in section 6/3.1, employed persons are generally not happier than unemployed ones. In western societies at least there are no great differences

and the differences that do exist only concern people who want to work; for the greater part chief wage earners. There is an indication that hard working does at least pay in the long run. In section 8/2b we will meet with the finding that Dutch adults, who remembered to have cherished plans in the realm of 'work' and 'study' in earlier phases of life, appeared slightly happier than their compatriots who reported no such earlier life-goals. Yet it is by no means sure that these laudable plans were actually put into practice.

Though not very strongly related to work-activity, happiness appeared highly related to participation in voluntary organizations. It has also been shown to be strongly linked with involvement in hobbies and sports, which is mostly not praised by advocates of ascetic living.

Sober living. Moralists also emphasize that a sober lifestyle is most rewarding in the long run. We have already seen that this view is not confirmed where the consumption of food and stimulants is concerned. Nor does it apply when we consider the broader material lifestyle. As shown in section 6/2.1, rich people are generally happier than poor ones. Though the advantage of wealth disappeared largely in the modern western nations, it is still neutral rather than detrimental to happiness. One could object that the reference to 'income' is not correct in this context, a high income not interfering necessarily with sober living. Therefore it is worth mentioning a Canadian study that related happiness to presence of material comforts in the house, e.g. refrigerator, separate bedrooms, etc. It found more happiness among people living the most luxuriously (Findings summarized in Databook Part III section I 1.1.6).

Renouncing pleasures. Consistently, traditional moralists warn against the pursuit of enjoyment, which was condemned as idle and superficial, true satisfaction being a 'gift'. More specifically it is argued that happiness is typically a 'by-product of virtuous living' and that the conscious pursuit of it is likely to result in its reverse. A recent advocate of this view is Frankl (1976:109). See also Fitzgerald (1979:2478). Again the data do not support this view. In section 7/4b we will see that happy people in the Netherlands report more life goals concerning 'pleasure' and 'happiness', while in section 7/5.4b it will appear that happy people are more apt to approve of pleasure than unhappy ones.

So far the findings do not bear the suggestion that an ascetic way of life is more rewarding; at least not in the modern western world. Yet we must once

more realize that the data can be distorted and that effects of happiness may be involved which neutralize an otherwise positive effect of ascetism.

e. Discussion.

Leisure activity excepted, happiness appeared largely unrelated to lifestyles. Yet we cannot conclude definitely that these lifestyle differences are irrelevant for the enjoyment of life, the reality value of the findings not being checked sufficiently and the observations limited to present day western society. Still another thing is that the investigations at hand here covered only a few lifestyle variables. There are many more that can possibly be related to happiness, e.g. variations in 'regular living' and 'commitment to responsibilities'.

7/4 HAPPINESS AND LONGINGS

Obviously the appreciation of life depends heavily on what one wants out of it. People living in identical conditions and having similar personal resources at their disposal can still differ in happiness because they set different demands. Several investigations tried to demonstrate that empirically. They covered various kinds of 'demands': personal 'longings', which involve notions about things one wants for oneself as well as 'convictions'; more general notions about what is good and worthwhile. This section will deal with the relationship of happiness to personal 'longings'. The relationship between happiness and 'convictions' will be considered in the next section.

The term 'longings' is still too broad. The investigations involved in fact subtly differing things. Most aimed at what I would call *aspirations*; conscious notions that one wants something. Aspirations do not necessarily involve behavioral intentions. Where they do, I have used the term *goals*. Aspirations as well as goals are thus conscious notions about things one positively wants. Next to these conscious longings some investigators groped for more or less subconscious tendencies, such as aptness to appear better than others and to seek social approval. Longings of that kind are usually referred to as 'needs'. However, I look upon this term as misleading, because of its implicit suggestion that the longing concerns something that is 'good' for the organism. Hence I will refer to them as *motivational undercurrents*.

Furthermore, happiness has been related to responses to questions about the things one is 'worried about'. These responses seem to represent longings as well: they concern matters that menace the realization of things one positively wants. The correlations with happiness are quite similar to those of 'aspirations'. I therefore decided to include these findings in this section. I will refer to them as *worries*. Responses to questions about the things one tends to 'think of often' may also reflect longings. Consequently findings on the relationship between happiness and *concerns* are included in this section as well.

Longings can differ in several respects. The most evident difference is that they can concern diverse 'objects'. People long for different things; some primarily for status improvements, others for love or for pleasures. As we will see below not all aims are equally frequent among happy and unhappy persons. Apart from differences in the objects of longings there are differences in other aspects as well. Longings, for instance, can differ in articulation', in 'urgency' and in 'diversity'. There are moreover differences in the degree to which people have any definite longings at all. As yet only a few investigators considered these matters. See section H 3.4 in part III of the Databook. More information on the matter will be presented in my book on happiness and life goals (Veenhoven, in preparation). Sizable correlations did not result. Hence I will not discuss these findings but focus on the ones about "objects' of longings. ·

a. Aspirations (H 3.2.1)

The relationship between happiness and objects of aspirations has been considered in the earlier mentioned investigation in fourteen nations by Cantril (1965). All 18.653 participants in this investigation were asked to enumerate their most important 'hopes and wishes'. Their responses were recorded verbatim and were later classified on the basis of a content analysis. To his amazement Cantril found a similar pattern all over the world. In all countries most people appeared to be most concerned about their 'economic welfare', the most frequently mentioned aspiration being a 'decent standard of living'. Second in frequency were references to 'family matters' closely followed by references to 'health'. Far less frequent were aspirations concerning 'personal values and character' and 'work'. Aspirations about more remote matters, such as 'society', 'justice' and the 'international situation' were seldom mentioned in any country (p. 159-162). Within countries the responses varied

somewhat between people of different 'gender', 'age' and 'education'. Yet these differences were relatively small.

Next, Cantril checked whether some of these categories of aspirations were mentioned more frequently by the happy than by the unhappy. This appeared indeed to be the case. Happy people referred more often to matters of *value and character*, to *health*, to *family* and to *the international situation*. The finding that happy people more often mentioned matters concerning 'values' and 'the international situation' is consistent with the observation that they are more apt to stress matters of value anyway. (To be discussed below in section 7/5.1a). On the other hand unhappy people referred more often to *economic* matters; in particular to the wish to improve their 'standard of living'. Happy and unhappy people did not differ in the frequency of their reports of aspirations in the realm of *work* and *society*. Cantril made this analysis on the basis of his entire world sample. Unfortunately he did not consider each nation separately, nor did he inspect whether these differences are similar across social categories.

In the context of an other investigation US students were asked what they wanted from their time at the university. They were to answer by rating the importance of the possibilities listed. Most of these ratings appeared to be unrelated to their hedonic level. The only significant correlation that was found concerned the 'wish to prepare for a career that starts right after graduation. Students who had stressed this aspiration in their junior years appeared to report relatively high hedonic levels in their senior years.

In the US happiness has also been related to educational aspirations as such. An investigation among high school pupils showed that happy pupils had more 'plans to go to college'. On the other hand an investigation among middle-aged, middle class couples found happy respondents less inclined to wish they had had a 'longer schooling' (Databook part III section H 3.2.2).

Aspirations for change (H 3.1.1/2). Two investigations in England and three in the US related happiness to the degree to which people long for changes in their life. The results are quite consistent. People who want to keep things as they are tend to be happier than those who want change. All three happiness variants were involved in these investigations. 'Contentment' and 'overall happiness' appear to be more distinctly related to the wish to maintain the status quo than 'hedonic level'.

One investigation in the US assessed the relation of overall happiness to aspired changes in specific domains of life. It found that the unhappiness of change seekers is most pronounced among those who want 'better work',

'more education' and 'better health'. Reports of desires about better 'social relations' and 'physical appearance' were unrelated to happiness. Aspirations concerning one's own 'character' (e.g. less worrying) turned out to be a luxury problem. Reports of such aspirations were more frequent among happy persons. With the exception of 'health', these findings fit in with the above-mentioned cross-national pattern found by Cantril.

Unfulfilled aspirations (H 3.3.2). An investigation in the US focused on unfulfilled aspirations. Not surprisingly reports of unfulfilled aspirations were more frequent among the unhappy; especially unfulfilled aspirations in the realm of 'marriage' and 'family'. Remember that the preceding chapter showed unhappiness to be paralleled by unfulfilled aspirations in the realm of 'work' as well. (Wanting to work, but being unemployed or compelled to retire; not wanting to work, but being obliged to. See section 6/3.1). Unhappiness appeared also more frequent among people reporting unfulfilled aspirations in the domain of 'social participation'. (Wanting to meet people, but not being able to because of illness or retirement (Section 6/4.3).

The just mentioned investigation related happiness also to a global estimate of the degree to which one's aspirations have been realized. Four other American investigations did the same. Not surprisingly, high correlations appeared, both with overall happiness and hedonic level. Actually, the so-called 'cognitive component' of happiness is involved here. The extent to which one perceives one's aspirations to be realized is what I called 'contentment'. The relation of contentment to the other two happiness variants has already been discussed in section 4/4.

b. Life goals

I use the term 'life goal' for aspirations which involve the conscious intention of spending a major part of one's energy on their realization. I myself investigated the relation between happiness and the object of life goals. That study was based on a purposive sample in the Netherlands and involved indicators of all three happiness variants (Veenhoven, in preparation). Some kinds of goals again appeared more frequently among the happy than among the unhappy and vice versa. However, the differences were not entirely identical to the ones Cantril found in his world sample. Persons who aimed at *improving themselves psychologically*, appeared relatively unhappy. The same applied to those aiming at *better intimate relations* and those who intended to focus

their energy on *study and work*. People who focused on the achievement of *material goals* or on *ideals* appeared neither above nor below average. Contrary to moralistic opinion, people who aimed at *pleasure* were somewhat happier than average. The same was true for people who claimed to aim at preserving *good health*.

The correlations between happiness and *former life goals* were not always identical to the correlations between happiness and present life goals. Though happiness was negatively related to current goals of 'work and study', reports of former goals of that kind appeared positively related to it.

c. **Motivational undercurrents (P 1.5)**

Though there is a wealth of literature about hidden motives, the matter received little attention in happiness studies. Only three phenomena of this kind have been considered up till now.

Tendency to try to excel competitively (P 1.5.1). Our two early investigations among English schoolboys and students found hedonic level positively related to the intensity of their 'desire to excel at performances in which the person has a chief interest', such as work or sports. Hedonic level having been rated by others, the difference is unlikely to be due to parallel desirability bias.

Tendency to seek social approval (P 1.5.2). Nine investigations related happiness to the degree to which social approval is sought. Here again we meet with the early English studies. The others come from the contemporary US: two among schoolboys, one among male students, one among married females and two among national samples of adults. The results of these investigations are contradictory. Six found positive correlations, one found a negative relation and two found the variables unrelated. These differences exist both between investigations dealing with students and between general population surveys. They are probably due to the fact that rather different indicators were used. These studies have already been referred to in the earlier discussion on social desirability bias in the measurement of happiness in section 3/1f.

Tendency to seek excitement (P 1.5.3). Two investigations among American students explored the relationships between happiness and 'excitement seeking'. They found strong positive correlations. Excitement seeking appeared

more closely related to hedonic level than to overall happiness. Remember the earlier discussion about happiness and activity level in section 7/ 1.4.

d. Worries (P 5)

Differences in the object of 'worries' and 'problems' have been shown to be related to happiness as well. Two investigations considered the matter. One is the above mentioned cross-national investigation which also assessed the relation of happiness to 'aspirations'; the other is an early survey in the US. The results more or less coincide with the above mentioned pattern of correlations with the things one positively wants.

Consistent with the finding that unhappy people mention 'economic' aspirations more often, it was shown that people who report worries about *finances and economic conditions* appeared less happy than average. Worries about one's *housing conditions* were also paralleled by unhappiness. The finding that happy people mention more aspirations concerning *values and character, health, family relations* and the *international situation* was paralleled by the greater happiness of people who mentioned worries in these fields. As in the case of aspirations, reference to matters of *work* was again unrelated to happiness.

In fact there is only one difference: worries about *national political problems* appeared somewhat more frequent among the happy, while the happy did not mention more aspirations on the matter.

e. Concerns (C 2)

The relationship between happiness and 'interests' has been studied in the US only. Americans who often think about *getting ahead, money* and *work* appeared again to be relatively unhappy. The same was true for people who were particularly concerned about their health and getting old. Thinking often about *marriage* and *rearing children* was unrelated to happiness. Positive links have been found between hedonic level and concern for *values* and *interest in politics*. At least this was the case among American students.

It is worth noting that the relationship between happiness and concerns was not equally strong in all social status categories. Thinking often about *death* and *ill health* and about *nuclear war* appeared most strongly related to unhappiness in the lower social strata in the US, while concern about *getting ahead and personal enemies* was more closely correlated to unhappiness at the

higher levels of the social ladder.

Further, happiness appeared not differently related to 'controllable concerns' (e.g. money, marriage, personal enemies) than to 'uncontrollable ones' (e.g. death, growing old, atom bomb).

f. Discussion

Three impressions emerge from these findings:

The first is that happiness relates rather similarly to the objects of 'aspirations', 'goals', 'worries' and 'concerns'; the ones that differentiate with happiness are, generally, the same.

A second impression is that the relationship is not affected by the degree to which the individual has control over the realization of the longings. Happiness is no more closely related to the object of 'goals' (which involve behavioral intentions), than to the object of 'aspirations' (which do not necessarily involve plans). Nor is happiness more closely related to more or less 'controllable' longings (such as those about 'income' and 'family') than to the typically 'uncontrollable longings' (such as about 'health' or the 'international situation').

Thirdly, and most importantly, the findings suggest that happy and unhappy people differ in the priority given to certain aims. As we have seen, unhappy people were found to long for *changes* in their life, in particular for improvements in the area of *money* and *work*. On the other hand happy people reported more longings concerning *family* and personal *values and character*. The happy also reported more longings about their *health* and *pleasures*. At the same time they were more concerned about issues that lay further afield, happy people worrying more about *political problems*. This pattern appeared most clearly in Cantril's worldwide investigation on aspirations and worries in 1960. It was also shown in several investigations in the US at that time: in investigations which dealt with 'unfulfilled aspirations' as well as in investigations which related happiness to 'worries'. A more or less similar pattern was found in my own investigation on 'life goals' in the Netherlands; except for the emphasis on matters of 'character' relating differently to happiness in this case. The same pattern will appear in a later discussion on the relation of happiness to beliefs about the things that add most to the quality of life (Section (7I5.4a). So it seems that we are dealing with a more or less general pattern; currently general at least. It is worth taking a better look at.

Artefacts? Firstly we must question whether we are dealing with genuine relationships or with statistical artefacts.

The chance that the results are due to parallel desirability bias is again small. Only the overrepresentation of references to 'values and character' and the 'international situation' by happy people could be explained that way. If operative, parallel desirability bias should also have caused an over-representation of references to 'work' among the happy. As we have seen this is not the case. 'Pleasure seeking' generally being in bad odor, we should also expect happy people to be relatively reluctant to mention longings of that kind. As we have seen this is not the case either.

There is more reason to believe that some correlations are spurious. The fact that unhappy people report more 'material' longings might for example be influenced by the fact that they are poorer on average and less happy for that reason. Actually there was indeed a correlation between happiness and 'income' in all the populations in which this relationship appeared. Remember section 6/2.1. Several personal characteristics might possibly be responsible for a spurious relationship as well. Happy people could be more concerned about social problems because they are less preoccupied with inner problems, or because they are more apt to believe that they can influence things (Shown in the sections 7/1.2 and 7/2.1). When such variables are checked, several relationships will probably appear to be more modest or will disappear altogether. However, it is also possible that some relationships will come forth more pronouncedly. This could for instance be the case with the relationship between happiness and longings about 'health'. As we have seen, happy people refer more often to their health both in their enumeration of 'aspirations and goals' and in their report of 'worries'. Such references are probably more frequent among people who are in ill health. Ailing people being less happy on average (demonstrated in section 7/ 1.1), the relationship between happiness and health references could in fact be stronger than has appeared so far.

The fact that happy people refer more often to matters of health leads me to a last possible source of distortion. It could be that happy people have less pronounced longings than unhappy ones and are therefore more apt to respond to questions on the matter by referring to broad and obvious things like 'good health', 'pleasure' and 'solution of social problems'. My earlier mentioned investigation about happiness and life goals provided some support for this view. Happy people indeed appeared somewhat less likely to report clear goals. However, the differences were rather small (Veenhoven, in preparation).

All in all it is not yet clear whether or not happy and unhappy people differ in the things they long for. Still it is worthwhile to dwell a little longer on the possibility that there are indeed genuine differences and to explore the causal mechanisms that might play a role. The matter is important and the exercise may provide an insight into some of the complexities involved.

Could happiness influence longings? Again I will begin with the possibility that the statistical differences reflect effects of joy in living. Are there any reasons why unhappy people should long for different things than happy people? There are. First of all it is evident that unhappiness may encourage people to long for 'change'. Life being considered unsatisfactory, they look for improvement and thus for alteration. Resignation is likely to prevail only where improvements are out of reach.

As we have seen the unhappy reached out for 'economic improvement' in particular. All findings on the matter come from countries where happiness was firmly related to income at that time. This may mean that they longed for the right medicine. Furthermore happiness-stereotypes can be involved. As we have seen in section 6/2.1, financial affluence is generally seen as a prime source of happiness; even in countries where income no longer adds to it. People who are unable to grasp the non-economic reasons for their dissatisfaction with life could therefore still attribute their unhappiness to their financial situation and hence desire more money first of all.

This reasoning does not bring us very far in accounting for the fact that unhappy people are less apt to focus on matters of 'family' and 'health'; these things being generally recognized as important sources of happiness as well, and in fact more conducive to it. Evident reasons why joy in living could gear longings to matters of 'values and character' or 'pleasures' do not readily come to mind either. Let us now turn to the possibility that the differences are in fact due to the effects of aims on happiness.

How could longings influence happiness? Part of the studies discussed in this section were instigated by the idea that some longings are more gratifying in the long run than others. This notion is an old one. Since Antiquity it figures in theories about happiness. Aristotle, for instance, already distinguished between 'real' longings and more 'vain' ones. Pursuit of the former was thought to be more conducive to happiness than pursuit of the latter (Barrow, 1980:16/18). Several Christian philosophers even suggested that some longings are detrimental to happiness, in particular yearnings for 'wealth and

power' and 'desires of the flesh'. In their view the way to happiness begins by renouncing these earthly longings.

There are at least two reasons why some longings could be more conducive to happiness than others:

The first reason is that not all longings are equally *attainable*. People who long for 'love' and 'acceptance' risk less disappointment than people longing for 'fame'; the latter social commodity generally being scarcer. Failure, moreover, is more obvious for some longings than for others: a person aiming at 'political success' can less easily fool himself than someone searching for 'divine acceptance'.

Seen in this light we could attribute the relative unhappiness of people aiming at 'economic' improvement to the fact that chances tend to be relatively scarce in this field; well paying jobs being scarcer than nice families for example. We could also link it with the fact that standards of financial success tend to be relatively clearly defined; differences in income being less easily deniable than differences in, for instance, marital success. This suggestion does not discount the earlier hypothesis that unhappy people dream more about economic matters because they are deprived economically and unhappy for that reason.

The fact that unhappy persons tend to report more aspirations about 'change' can be explained in terms of attainability as well. Maintaining the status quo is generally easier than bringing about specific changes; people who aim at change are therefore more likely to meet with disappointments. As we have seen above unhappiness can also foster longings for change.

The second reason is that not all longings reflect *what people really need*. The pursuit of some longings can in fact cause harm in the long run. The aspirations to climb the social ladder can for instance impede the fulfillment of other longings (e.g. to involve in sports) or can even conflict with more basic bio-psychic demands (such as the needs for rest, safety and be- longing).

Longings that do not match human nature are commonly referred to as 'false' ones. The development of such harmful desires is typically *attributed* to evil social forces: to hidden persuaders in advertising, to mind-controlling politicians and to irrational fads. Yet the problem is broader. 'False longings' may come forth from generally respected institutions and belief systems; notions about what is worthwhile being mostly deeply entrenched in the culture at large. The development of longings is moreover not wholly dictated by social forces; wise people can make a good choice out of

an otherwise bad cultural assortment of aspirations, while disturbed people can sometimes develop harmful desires of which no cultural models are available.

Materialistic longings are often depicted as 'false'. Early Christian moralists in particular emphasized that its pursuit blocks the way to superior religious experiences. Similarly, several critics of modern western societies argue that success in the 'social rat race' gives at best superficial satisfaction, mostly at the cost of frustrations in the more essential realms of 'love' and 'identity'. At first sight the findings seem in accordance with these views. Reports of 'materialistic' longings were indeed typical of the unhappy, while longings with respect to 'family' and 'values' were more frequently held by happy people.

Yet this does not imply that materialistic longings are always detrimental for everybody. One can for instance imagine that they work negatively only for people who have already secured minimum comforts. In line with Maslow's (1954) hierarchical theory one could expect such people to take more pleasure in pursuing 'higher' needs, such as 'love', 'esteem' and 'self-actualization'. The findings would then suggest that most people in the world have climbed the lowest step of Maslow's need-ladder. However, there is no independent evidence for that implication. In fact there is not even convincing evidence that Maslow's need-hierarchy exists at all.

Anyway, there are many people who live at a material subsistence level. These people obviously do well to seek material improvement. If successful, that striving can favor their happiness in the long run, but obviously it does not materialize in the current happiness of these people. They still suffer the discomfort of poverty and the very striving for better impedes the anesthesia of resignation. In this context it is worth remembering that my above mentioned investigation in the Netherlands found more happiness among people who claimed to have aimed at matters of 'work' and 'study' in earlier phases of their life, while present aims of that kind were rather more frequent among the unhappy.

So far these remarks have been highly speculative. Still they demonstrate that a great many effects could be involved, which could to some extent outweigh each other. It is also clear that the balance of effects is not likely to be identical for everyone in every situation. Taking this into account, it is all the more remarkable that so clear and consistent a pattern has emerged in such different populations.

7/5 HAPPINESS AND CONVICTIONS

By 'convictions' I mean theories and ideas about what life is like and what it ought to be like. Everybody holds certain convictions, but not everybody cherishes the same ones. Differences in convictions have often been held responsible for differences in happiness. Traditionally, moralists depict happiness as the fruit of adherence to the 'right' convictions. Current opinion is rather that convictions influence happiness, because they serve as a criterion in the evaluation of life. Both notions induced several investigators to inspect whether differences in convictions do in fact go together with differences in happiness. As we will see below this was not the case on the whole. It is not easy to bring in order to the findings at hand. Though not wholly distinct, the following division will suffice. Firstly, there are what I call '*ethical values*': notions about what is essentially good and worthwhile. The relation of happiness to ethical values will be discussed in section 7/5.1. Secondly, several investigations considered the relation of happiness to '*religious convictions*' (Section 7/5.2). Thirdly happiness has been related to '*(un)conventionality of outlook*' in some fields (Section 7/5.3). Finally some investigators took a glance at the relation of happiness to '*convictions concerning happiness itself*' (Section 7/5.4.)

7/5.1 HAPPINESS AND ETHICAL VALUES (V 1)

When speaking about ethical values (or 'values' for short), I refer to the field of moral principles. Happiness has been related to three aspects of ethical values: firstly, to the degree to which the individual is concerned about moral matters at all; secondly to the degree to which personal values are shared by others, and thirdly, to the differences in adherence to several value principles. I will begin by summarizing the findings on each of these topics and then discuss the latter one in more detail.

a. **Emphasis on ethical values (V 1.3)**

Two early investigations among British and American students touched on the relationship between hedonic level and 'concern for moral problems' (Webb, 1915, resp. Symonds, 1937). The British study did not find differences

in hedonic level between students who were 'keen on the goodness or wickedness of actions' and the ones who were not. The American study found differences among college students, but not among high school pupils and graduate students. College students who were most concerned about 'moral problems' and interested in a 'philosophy of life' appeared to report relatively high hedonic levels. Remember that Cantril's worldwide investigation found happy people more apt to refer to matters of 'value' when responding about their personal aspirations, worries and interests.

Though suggestive, these findings are by no means conclusive. It is not even certain that they are correct. The difference may be largely spurious, (result, for instance, from common variance with 'self-esteem' or 'control beliefs') or they may veil a stronger curvilinear relationship. As far as they are valid, the differences can obviously be interpreted as resulting from effects of happiness on moral concern and vice versa. In both cases effects are likely to be variable across situations.

b. Sharing of ethical values (V 1.2)

An investigation in the US has shown the happiness of married females to be positively related to 'value similarity' with their husband and other social network members. However, among unmarried females no relationship between happiness and value similarity with social network members appeared. Value similarity with parents was not related to the happiness of American college students either. Those who held more liberal views on sex than their parents were at least not less happy. Differences with peers on this matter were slightly more frequent among unhappy students (Databook part III section S 3.1.3).

It is thus evident that value similarity is not always equally crucial for all persons in all social relationships. Obviously much depends on the centrality of the values involved and on the size of the discrepancies. The tolerance of the social environment is critical as well. These variables have not been considered as yet.

c. Value preferences (V 1.1)

Four investigations inspected whether happy people cherish other values than unhappy ones. Three in the US and one in the EC countries. One of the

American investigations covered a broad range of moral principles, the others focused on adherence to only one.

The broad investigation was among students. These students completed four questionnaires: the Allport (1960) 6-item 'Value Inventory'; the Morris (1956) 13-item 'Ways to Live Scale', the Rokeach (1968) 18-item 'Terminal Value Scale' and the 18-item Rokeach (1968) 'Instrumental Values Scale'. The questionnaires were given two scores: one to indicate the absolute desirability of each of the values mentioned and one to indicate the rank order of desirability. Over and above that the students wrote a short essay on their 'philosophy of life'. These essays were subjected to a content analysis. A 73-item list of 'Value Dimensions' resulted. All these value preferences were related to hedonic level. Only a few significant correlations were found, sometimes differing between males and females.

Findings. Hedonic level appeared relatively low among students who emphasized *intellectual values* ('wisdom', 'logic', 'understanding'). It was also slightly lower among the ones who stressed *independence of others* ('individualism', 'inner directedness', 'freedom') and *self-control*. These negative relationships were most pronounced among males.

On the other hand hedonic level was clearly higher among students who cherished *hedonic values* ('happiness', 'pleasure', 'cheerfulness', 'inner peace') both among males and females. This finding will be discussed in more detail in section 7/5.4. Hedonic level was found relatively high as well among the ones who gave a high ranking to *social values*. ('love', 'sympathy', 'friendship', 'forgivingness', 'tolerance', 'group participation') and to *religious values*. The latter two trends were most pronounced among the female students.

Hedonic level appeared unrelated to emphasis on various *political values* ('conservatism', 'conformity', 'equality', 'world peace'). It was also found unrelated to various *personality values* ('ambitiousness', 'self respect', 'broad-mindedness', 'capability', 'creativeness', 'honesty'). Nor was there any link between hedonic level and moral appreciation of *economic issues* ('comfort', 'security') or between hedonic level and adherence to *aesthetic values* ('beauty', 'art', 'nature').

Another investigation in the US among military airmen showed overall happiness to be slightly positively related to adherence to the so-called *Protestant Ethic*. This was at least the case among low-skilled personnel. A Calvinist attitude towards work was unrelated to the happiness of military students.

Among high school boys in the US acceptance of typical *social values*

('kindness', 'honesty', 'self-control') was found to be negatively related to overall happiness; a result that contradicts the above mentioned study among students.

In 1973 an investigation in the EC countries related happiness to *materialism*: Hardly any differences appeared between 'materialist-oriented' Europeans and the ones that cherished the so-called 'post-materialist values' (Inglehart, 1977:132).

Discussion. These findings caused much surprise. All investigators had expected stronger correlations. Their expectations were based on at least two lines of thought:

Firstly, some believed that ethical values tend to determine satisfaction with life. Fordyce (1972:8) writes for instance that a person's values influence his behavior and thus affect his living conditions in the long run, while values also play a role in the appreciation of these very conditions.

Secondly, most investigators assumed that happiness affects the course of moral development. In line with Maslow's (1968) theories, they assumed happy people to be more inclined to emphasize the so-called 'self-actualizing values'. For that reason Fordyce (1972:195) expected happy people to lay relatively great emphasis on values in the realm of 'individualism', while Inglehart (1977:137) predicted that they would attach relatively less importance to 'materialist' values. As we have seen, the findings provide little support for these views. The difference in value orientation between happy and unhappy people appeared to be small. The two predictions just mentioned even met with flat contradiction: in the case of 'individualism' the reverse appeared to be true. Does this mean that the arguments just cited were entirely incorrect? Not necessarily; they were incomplete, because they did not take into account that opposed effects may be involved as well, and may overshadow the predicted ones statistically. Nor did they recognize that the balance of effects is characteristically variable.

Let us take 'social values' as an example. Remember that adherence to these values was positively related to hedonic level among US college students and negatively to the overall happiness of US high school boys. Emphasis on social values can affect happiness positively when it fosters positive social behavior and contributes thereby to the sustaining of social relationships. However, it does not always work that way. Members of minority groups are often rejected anyway, whether they behave nicely or not, while others are sometimes powerful enough to gain acceptance in spite of blunt behavior. Over and above that, effects of the values at hand depend on the social appreciation

of the behavior they induce and on the fitting in of that behavior with various other characteristics of the individual. Emphasis on social values can also influence happiness negatively. One can for example imagine that confrontation with mistrust and aggression is more distressing to people who cherish higher values and that this orientation sometimes even hampers their ability to maintain themselves in a hostile environment. Similar complex processes may underlie possible effects of happiness on moral development. It is possible that a positive appreciation of life makes people less egocentric, thus fostering the adoption of social values, but it is also possible that unhappiness makes people more aware of the significance of social solidarity and support. Again much may depend on various further variables, e.g. on whether one's unhappiness is due to other people or not.

So many effects being involved, one can imagine that the balance may easily turn out differently in various social categories. Seen in this light we need not be surprised that social values like 'kindness' and 'honesty' relate negatively to overall happiness among high school-boys in the US, but positively to the hedonic level of college students. It is also comprehensible that this latter positive correlation was more pronounced among female students than among male ones. Cross-cultural investigations in this field are likely to produce sizable differences as well.

In spite of all these differences it is still likely that the consequences of at least some values are less variable (i.e. less dependent for their effect on the interaction with other factors). It would for instance seem that moral disapproval of 'pleasure' is almost always detrimental to happiness. In section 7/5.4 I will discuss that matter in more detail.

7/5.2 RELIGION (R 1)

Religions can obviously be an aid for psychological functioning. They help to give positive meaning to inevitable sufferings, provide explanations for unintelligible things, serve as a source of social support, etc. This made several investigators expect that believers are generally more satisfied with their life than non-believers, and fully committed church-members happier than the marginal ones. Some of them also considered differences in happiness between people of different religious denominations.

a. Religiousness

The degree to which people adhere to religious convictions has been assessed in three ways. firstly, by asking them whether or not they consider themselves as a 'member' of a church; secondly, by asking them about the 'importance' they attach to religion', and thirdly, by inquiring about their 'participation' in religious activities.

Church-membership (R 1.1). Four investigations compared the overall happiness of people who claim to belong to a church with the happiness of non-members. Three of these were performed in the Netherlands and one in the US. This latter study was a general population survey in 1946. It found more happiness among church-members. The first Dutch study was a general population survey as well. It was performed in 1948 and found a similar difference. The two latter studies in the Netherlands were based on probability samples in big cities. They were performed in the mid-sixties. Both found happiness unrelated to church-membership, thus suggesting that the existing relationship was disappearing in the Netherlands. Yet the data do not allow a definite conclusion as to this time trend, because the populations are not identical.

Perceived importance of religion (R 1.1). Four American investigations inquired about the importance of religion. All found modest positive correlations with happiness, both with overall happiness and contentment. Unfortunately none considered church-members and non-members separately. Questions and measures of association being different, the data do not allow a comparison through time.

Religious participation (R 1.3). Eight investigations related happiness to frequency of church-going. Six of them were performed in the US, one in the Netherlands and one in the Philippines. The results are contradictory at first sight: five found slight positive relationships, but three did not find any correlation.

The contradiction in the American studies seems largely a matter of time. Three general population surveys in respectively 1946, 1957 and 1972/3 show steadily declining correlations between overall happiness and church attendance; the last one found that the relationship had disappeared entirely among young Americans. The same trend is reflected by the fact that a study in the late 1960's among aged female public housing residents in the US still found a strong positive correlation between hedonic level and church

attendance, while overall happiness had already appeared unrelated to church-going in a pre-war investigation among female students in New York.

The contradictions might also be due to the fact that most investigations cover both believers and non-believers. It is not unlikely that churchgoing is associated with happiness among the former, but not among the latter. Difference in the proportion of believers to non-believers in the samples could thus produce quite different results. However, the earlier mentioned 1957 population survey in the US focused on believers only and found overall happiness to be slightly positively related to churchgoing, while a similarly focused investigation in Illinois in 1962 did not find any relation between hedonic level and churchgoing. A Dutch investigation in 1967 also distinguished between believers and non-believers. It found believers who attend church once a week to be about as happy as non-believers. Believers who do not attend church regularly appeared actually less happy than non-believers at that time.

One investigation considered the relation between happiness and 'change in church attendance'. This was the above mentioned investigation among aged female public housing residents in the US. These senior citizens were interviewed both in 1967 and 1971. In 1971 hedonic level was still positively related to frequency of church attendance in this group. However, among those who had increased church attendance since 1967 hedonic level was lower than among those who had not.

Investigators in the Netherlands and in the Philippines considered males and females separately. Happiness appeared more strongly related to church-going among the latter than among the former.

b. Religious denomination (R 1.2)

Dutch folklore suggests that Catholicism is a particularly happy faith. However, investigations in Germany (one study), the Netherlands (three studies) and the US (four studies) found hardly any difference in overall happiness between members of the various denominations. The picture could again be different after checking for potentially spurious factors, such as 'income' or 'occupational level'.

Greater differences appeared in an investigation in Nigeria in 1960. Here Muslims appeared to be most satisfied with life and adherents to the Pagan belief least. Christians were in the middle. As observed in section 6/2.2, associated socio-economic differences are probably responsible.

c. Discussion

The most outstanding finding is that the correlation at one time between happiness and religiousness has largely disappeared in the Netherlands and in the US. Correlations with both church-membership and church-attendance decreased; especially among the young, the educated and inhabitants of big cities.

Probably similar things happened in other western nations. This trend has not been recognized as yet. In order to explain it we must start by asking why happiness was ever related to religiousness in the first place.

Artefacts? The chance that the statistical links were due to parallel response bias is small; response tendencies being unlikely to affect answers to questions on church-membership or frequency of church-attendance to any great extent. Again it is more plausible that the correlations were spurious; the greater happiness of religious people may have been due, for instance, to their greater 'involvement in voluntary organizations' or to possible advantages over non-religious people with respect to 'income' or 'social prestige' at that time. (The relationship of happiness to these variables was discussed in the sections 6/3.2, 6.2.4 and 6/2.6 respectively). At the same time suppressor variables may have influenced the statistical differences in an opposite direction: for example a tendency of churches to attract relatively many 'lonely', 'ailing' and 'unstable' people. (Links of these potential suppressor-variables to happiness were discussed in the sections 6/4, 7/1.1 and 7/1.2). Such effects could even veil an existing link between happiness and religiousness entirely. No checks having been made, nothing can be said for sure.

Could happiness affect religiousness? If not spurious, wasn't the correlation then due to effects of happiness on church-membership and participation? That would mean that happy people felt more attracted to religion than the unhappy. The reverse would seem more likely; Christian religions tend to focus on relief for misfortune. Still it could be that happy people are less apt to break with a religious upbringing, because they tend to keep things as they are. (Remember section 7/4a, which showed that the happy aim less for change than the unhappy.) In that case we are dealing with a temporary difference as the result of delayed secularization. Again it is not specified to what extent such effects are actually involved.

How could religiousness affect happiness? It is obviously possible that the

investigators were correct in their hunch that religiousness contributes to the appreciation of life. Apart from the benefits touched upon in the introduction to this section, there are many more possible reasons; sometimes perhaps 'political protection', in some cases 'access to intimate networks' and probably sometimes the comfort of being 'normal' in a predominantly religious society. Obviously such effects are typically variable across religions and situations. Again, there is no independent evidence that things have really worked that way.

Why decreased? These few remarks may make clear that there are many ways of accounting for the observed drop in the correlation between happiness and religiousness. Changes in each of the discussed effects may have been involved. The possible spurious effect of 'income' may have decreased because the effect of income on happiness lessened or because secularization was more pronounced at the top of the social ladder than at the bottom. It is also possible that selective secularization left churches with relatively many lonely and disturbed members and that the otherwise positive effect of religions became thus even more veiled statistically. Last but not least, religion has obviously lost supportive power. Religious answers to existential questions lost credibility; hence people draw less strength from religious services. As the political power of churches lessened and their welfare work was largely taken over by the state, attendance of church-membership have withered as well.

7/5.3 (UN-)CONVENTIONALITY OF OUTLOOK

Some investigations allow a glimpse into the relation of happiness to views in political and cultural issues. The outcomes suggest that happiness is largely unrelated to differences in this respect. However, this matter has not been investigated systematically as yet. The few observations come largely from modern western societies.

a. **Political conservatism (P 3.2, P 3.3)**

In Cantril's worldwide investigation people were asked to mention their hopes and fears for their country. Happy people tended to say that they wanted to stay the way they are, while unhappy people more often expressed wishes for

political change. In the preceding section (7/4a) we have seen that the happy are also more apt to maintain the status quo in their personal life. Though this suggests that happy people incline to conservatism, it would be incorrect to conclude that happy people are characteristically reactionary. Extreme right wing people usually want pervasive political change and are thus more likely to be overrepresented among the unhappy. The view that political extremism is associated with unhappiness gets some support from a recent study by Barnes & Kaase (1977:390), which covered several western nations. The investigation found a relatively great incidence of unhappiness among persons inclined to engage in boycotts, demonstrations and strikes.

Three investigations related happiness to 'party preference'. An investigation in the Netherlands in 1948 found voters for center parties to be happier than adherents to left wing parties; supporters of the communist party being particularly unhappy. The extreme right had not yet crystallized in specific political parties at that time in the Netherlands. An investigation in nine European countries in 1973 found supporters of leftish parties relatively unhappy as well. Respondents who claimed to feel closest to right wing parties appeared happiest, even slightly happier than the ones who placed themselves in the political center (Inglehart, 1977:132). An investigation in the US in 1971 found slightly more happiness among Republican voters than among the Democrats. These differences are less easy to translate into terms of 'right' or 'left'.

All these differences could be spurious. They could for instance be due to associated differences in 'income' or 'ethnic origin'. None of the investigations checked the reality value of the differences. If not spurious the differences could again be due both to the effects of happiness on political conservatism and vice versa.

b. Restrictiveness in issues of sexuality (S 3.1)

During the latter decades, the social taboo on sexuality gradually lost strength in the US. In academic circles this development was quite pronounced in the 1960's. In that period two investigations among American college students related overall happiness to the acceptance of sexuality. One focused on attitudes. It showed students with 'liberal attitudes about sexuality' to be slightly less happy than students holding more conventional views. (Though the difference was not statistically significant). It is worth pointing out that the happiness

of these students was unrelated to the 'perceived liberality of their parents and peers' and also unrelated to perceived 'discrepancies of these people's views on sexuality with their own'; remember section 7/5.1b. The other study related happiness to 'liberality of actual sexual behavior' and to 'openness about that behavior towards peers'. It found slightly negative relationships as well. Discrepancies between attitudes and actual behavior appeared unrelated to happiness. The picture is once again complicated by the possibility that the correlations are distorted and that effects of happiness have been involved. Hence we cannot just conclude that liberalization brought unhappiness among these students.

c. Traditional gender-role preferences (G 1.2)

An investigation in the US in 1966 checked whether female college students holding a modern view of their role as women are happier than those who prefer the traditional gender-role. No differences in hedonic level appeared. Another study among female college students in the US in 1971 found no differences in overall happiness either between subjects who gave different descriptions of a 'feminine woman'. We must once more realize that checking procedures might possibly change the picture.

7/5.4 VIEWS ON HAPPINESS

Finally happiness has been related to convictions about happiness itself: to beliefs about things that contribute to the appreciation of life and to the moral appreciation of happiness. Fairly sizable correlations appeared.

a. Perceived sources of happiness (H 1.8)

In 1946 a representative sample of adults in the US was asked to mention 'some of the things that most of all make people more (un)happy'. Happy respondents answered this open question relatively often by referring to matters of *character*. They frequently emphasized the importance of morally desirable traits, such as 'being unselfish', 'wanting to make other people

happy' and 'understanding one's fellowmen'. Emphasis on 'contentment' or 'adjustment' was not more frequent among the happy. Happy people also referred more often to matters of *value*; in particular to 'religion'. Happy people also referred more frequently to relations with *intimates* such as 'spouse', 'children' and friends'. On the other hand unhappy respondents mentioned *socio-economic* matters more often as a source of (un)happiness. The incidence of references to matters of 'money' was particularly pronounced among the unhappy. Unhappy people also referred more often to *health*. Reference to *hedonic* matters such as 'fun' and 'enjoyment' appeared equally frequent among happy and unhappy respondents.

In the same year an investigation in Denmark confronted a group of college students with a long list of things that could possibly affect happiness and asked them to rate the importance of each of these. Though less pronounced, the differences in response between happy and unhappy persons turned out to be largely similar to the ones of the American survey. Happy people again laid greater emphasis on 'character', while unhappy people stressed 'economic' matters more. Matters of 'enjoyment' were once more given equal weight by the happy and the unhappy; except 'travelling', which was stressed more by the unhappy.

These results fit in strikingly well with the earlier observations on differences in 'longings' between happy and unhappy persons (Discussed in section 7/4). Remember that happy people looked to matters of 'value', 'character' and 'family', while unhappy people aimed at 'economic' improvements. This coincidence suggests that there is a close connection between personal longings and beliefs about what generally contributes to the appreciation of life. Yet there is one difference. The reporting of longings for good health was more frequent among the happy, while the unhappy mentioned health somewhat more as something that matters for the appreciation of life.

b. Valuation of happiness (H 1.10)

When dealing with the question of whether happiness can be measured, I noted that happiness is generally not a neutral matter. In western societies at least it ranks as a desirable quality. (Evidence cited in section 3/1.f). Though most western people tend to praise happiness as something good, not all do. The question is therefore whether people who rank happiness high, differ in their actual appreciation of life from people who rank it low.

Three investigations dealt with the matter. All are American. The first

asked male college students about their agreement or disagreement with various statements about happiness. The students who felt most cheerful generally appeared more apt to agree with such statements as 'Happiness is one of the primary goals in life' and 'Find me a truly happy man and I'll show you a man who is mature and creative'. On the other hand affectively depressed students agreed more often with statements as 'Only cows are contented', 'Most people who say they are happy close their eyes to the sufferings of the world' and 'I don't want to be happy; I want to be utterly alive'. The second study was also among college students. It asked them to rate the absolute and relative importance of various values, one of which was 'happiness'. This investigation has already been mentioned in section 7/5.I c. Happy students appeared more apt to emphasize the value of 'happiness' than unhappy ones. They awarded higher ratings to other hedonic values as well: among other things to 'pleasure' and to 'cheerfulness'. The third investigation has already been mentioned in section 3/1f. It was based on a probability sample in New England and the Mid-Atlantic states of the US. It also demonstrated a greater appreciation of life among persons who perceive happiness as a desirable trait; the correlation was particularly strong among females and among people who tend to seek social approval.

c. Discussion

These findings deserve further comment. They do so because they contradict the idea that hedonism is detrimental to happiness. We have already met with that belief in the earlier discussion on lifestyles. It depicts pleasure seeking as a menace to 'real' happiness; hedonism emptying itself in superficial satisfactions. (Remember section 7/3d). This notion may have far-reaching consequences; for example on ethics and education. It is thus worthwhile investigating whether it is correct or not.

At first sight the predictions are not supported by the facts, moral hedonism being positively related to happiness rather than negatively. However, this does not do away with the theory definitely. It is still possible that pleasure seeking is detrimental to happiness, but that its negative effects do not materialize in negative correlations because they are veiled by bias or overshadowed by a tendency on the part of happy people to justify themselves by praising hedonism. Let us therefore take a closer look at these possibilities.

Artefact? It is not very probable that the relationship is due to parallel response bias. Approving of pleasure is not as desirable a thing as actually taking pleasure in life in the US. Happiness was furthermore unrelated to the adherence to various values that rank as equally desirable in that country (for instance: 'wisdom', 'justice': see section 7/5.lc). Yet one can imagine that the correlation is spurious to some extent. It could for instance be due to common variance with 'education', 'social milieu' or even 'mental maturity'. These possibilities have not been checked.

Could happiness favor moral hedonism? The relationship is likely to be partly due to an effect of happiness on the moral appreciation of hedonism. In section 3/1f I already pointed out the possibility that happy people may praise themselves by cherishing pleasure, while unhappy people try to save face by minimizing its value. Apart from such self-bolsterings, deeper differences in lust-tolerance may be involved. A positive appreciation of life might foster the development of tolerant views, while chronic frustration may - in some circumstances - give rise to moral condemnation of all pleasures. Unfortunately it is not specified to what extent such effects actually occur. As yet there is little reason for assuming that it is so strong that it could counter-balance the claimed negative effects of hedonism on happiness.

How could moral hedonism affect happiness? Contrary to the earlier mentioned preachers of penitence, Fordyce (1972:11) wrote that ".. Individuals valuing happiness are more likely to achieve it .. ". He suggests that this is because "Acting happy, can make you happy". In support of this latter claim he refers to American experiments which have shown people who put on a cheerful face to become somewhat more cheerful as a result. His reasoning is hardly convincing, however. Not only do the experimental findings fail to allow that generalization, but it is also doubtful whether the moral appreciation of happiness matters much for how happily one acts. There are in fact better reasons for concluding that a positive appreciation of pleasure could add to happiness, or rather, that the moral rejection of pleasure is detrimental to it. A first one is that moral rejection of pleasure can easily involve the disregard of hedonic signals of like and dislike. As noted in the earlier discussion on 'activity' (section 7/ 1.3) these signals are linked to gratification of essential bio-psychical needs. Their disregard can hence harm the individual. Disregard of pain and fatigue can, for instance, damage health. Secondly, the moral rejection of pleasure can directly reduce the joy of living, because of the shadow of sin it casts over rewarding experiences, while on the other hand

approval of pleasure probably sharpens the perception of pleasurable experiences and hence tips the happiness balance positively.

Still it is possible that the prophets of penitence are right as far as extreme hedonism is concerned. The relationship between happiness and lust-acceptance may be curvilinear and maximal acceptance thus not optimal. Because none of the reports concerned presents frequency distributions this possibility cannot be checked as yet.

Findings on the matter all came from the contemporary US. If moral approval of pleasure adds to happiness in other countries as well, we have identified a potential cultural determinant of happiness. Lust-intolerant cultures are then liable to bring unhappiness. However, we have seen in section 6/1 that there exists as yet no direct empirical evidence for this assertion.

7/6 HAPPINESS AND APPRECIATIONS

A great many investigations related happiness to various attitudes involving the appreciation of specific aspects of life. Evidently, all found positive correlations; happiness being the overall appreciation of life-as-a-whole, it cannot fail to correspond to some extent with aspect-appreciations. More interesting than the positive correlations as such are the differences between them. Comparison of the various findings shows that happiness is more closely related to some aspect-appreciations than to others and that these differences are not identical in all populations.

The life-aspect-appreciations involved in these investigations are for the greater part '*global domain-appreciations*'; overall evaluations of some distinct part of life, such as 'marriage' or 'work'. A few studies considered the relationship between happiness and so-called '*criterion-judgements*' of life. These are evaluations of life-as-a-whole on the basis of some specific criterion: for instance, 'variety' or 'meaningfulness'. Some further investigations related happiness to '*criterion-domain-satisfactions*'; i.e. evaluations of some distinct part of one's life on the basis of a specific criterion; for instance the appreciation of 'variety at work'. Both '*global domain-satisfactions*' and '*criterion-judgements*' of life appeared mostly closely related to happiness. Links with '*criterion-domain appreciations*' were typically modest.

As most of the data refer to the relation between happiness and the appreciation of domains, I based this section on that subject matter. I begin with

the appreciation of 'oneself' (7/6.1), followed by 'other people' (7/6.2), 'society' (7/6.3), one's 'social position' (7/6.4), one's work (7/6.5), one's 'leisure' (7/6.6), one's 'living environment' (7/6.7), and one's 'health' (7/6.8). Finally I will discuss the differences in correspondence with happiness between the various global domain-satisfactions (7/6.9).

Most objects of the appreciations at hand have been mentioned in earlier sections, for instance in the sections on the 'society' one lives in (6/1), one's 'social position' (6/2) 'work' (6/3), 'intimates' (6/4) and 'health' (7/1.1). I decided not to present the findings in these contexts, because appreciation of these matters relates to happiness in a different way than the matters themselves do. Moreover, correlations with life-aspect-appreciations are most informative when compared mutually.

7/6.1 APPRECIATION OF ONESELF

Psychologists have distinguished many subtle differing modes of self-appreciation, variously labeled as 'identity', 'self-concept' or 'self-image'. All evaluative characterizations of oneself appeared closely linked to happiness.

a. Self-characterizations (S 2)

Least pronounced were the correlations with self-typifications in more or less neutral descriptive terms. Investigations among college students in the US showed somewhat more happiness among those who characterized themselves as 'sociable', 'open', 'strong', 'productive' and 'optimistic'. Students who described themselves as 'intellectual' and 'alienated' were generally less happy. The relationship appeared not wholly identical among male and female students. Among married females in the US happiness appeared positively related to self-characterizations as 'sociable' and 'productive'.

Most of these investigations used indicators of 'hedonic level'. One that focused on 'overall happiness' yielded similar results.

Stability of self-image (S 2.1.2) Two studies were performed on this matter, both in the US. High school pupils who claimed to hold definite opinions about themselves appeared somewhat happier than pupils who said that ideas about themselves tend to change. They reported higher hedonic level and

more overall happiness. However, female students who provided similar self-descriptions in 'elation' as in 'depression' did not turn out to be happier than those who gave different descriptions in these conditions.

Real-ideal self-congruency (S 2.1.1) One investigation among a small sample of university students in the US related happiness to the correlation between real-self and ideal-self descriptions on lengthy checklists. Such congruency was strongly related to hedonic level among males. Surprisingly, a negative relationship appeared among females.

b. Self-evaluations (S 2.1)

Happiness was also related to more global evaluations of oneself. Most investigations found high correlations. Populations and indicators being very heterogeneous, the data provide little opportunity for comparison.

Self-esteem (S 2.1.3) Ten investigations related happiness to overall self-esteem: two in England and eight in the US. Three American studies and one English investigation were based on general population samples; the other used students as respondents. All investigations found positive relationships. All three happiness indicators were involved. As a result of the heterogeneity of indicators of self-esteem and populations it cannot be established whether one of these relates more strongly to self-esteem than the others. Nor do the data allow comparisons through time, nor comparison between England and the US.

Self-confidence (S 2.1.4) This variable has figured in one early investigation in England, in two investigations in the Netherlands and in four in the US. Strong links appeared again with all three happiness variants. One American investigation suggests that self-confidence is more closely related to 'contentment' than to 'overall happiness'. Again comparison between nations is difficult.

Global satisfaction with oneself (S 2.1.5) Four American investigations showed happiness to be strongly related to global satisfaction with oneself. Two of these covered the adult population of the US. Both used indicators of overall happiness. The others were based on probability samples among adults in Houston and among high-school pupils in New York State. Both assessed

'overall happiness' as well as 'hedonic level' and found the former happiness variant somewhat more closely correlated with self-satisfaction than the latter.

7/6.2 APPRECIATION OF OTHER PEOPLE

Happiness was also related to attitudes towards other people. Most investigations focused on its relation to attitudes about intimates and a few assessed the relationship of happiness to attitudes about people in general.

a. **Appreciation of one's marriage (S 1.7.2)**

In the preceding chapter we saw that married people are generally happier than unmarried people. (Section 6/4.1a). It also appeared that the happiness of married people corresponds with the quality of the relationship with their spouse. (Section 6/4.1b). Hence it will be no surprise that happiness was typically greater among married people who hold positive attitudes towards their spouse.

Fourteen investigations in six nations all showed high correlations between overall happiness and global satisfaction with one's marriage, not only in modern western nations (Britain, Finland, the Netherlands, US), but also in Poland and the Philippines. Unfortunately it is not possible to ascertain whether the relationship is stronger in some nations than in others.

In the Philippines the relationship appeared stronger among females than among males. Some investigations in the Netherlands and the US found a similar gender difference, but some did not. Two studies in the Netherlands and the US found somewhat stronger correlations among young adults than among elderly persons. One US study found a more pronounced correlation at the top of the social ladder than at the bottom, but a Dutch investigation found the reverse.

In the Netherlands a time trend can be observed. Between 1948 and 1965 happiness became more closely related to marital satisfaction. See Veenhoven (1983) for more detail. Between 1971 and 1978 the relationship grew stronger in the US as well (Campbell, 1981:241). Remember that in both countries happiness became more closely linked to marital status in the post-war decades. (Demonstrated in section 6/4.1a). These findings contradict Lasch's

(1977) lamentation that western people are becoming increasingly narcissistic and hence less deeply involved in marital relations.

b. Appreciation of one's children (F 1.2.4, F 1.3)

In section 6/4.2 we saw that having children as such is unrelated to happiness. However, among those who have children, happiness is clearly related to the appreciation of them. Parents who feel that children give them more trouble than pleasure were typically less happy than parents who enjoyed their children. This was established in two investigations in the US, one focusing on hedonic level and the other on overall happiness. A British study demonstrated a modest relationship between the (overall) happiness of parents and their satisfaction with their children's education.

c. Appreciation of one's family (F 1.3, M 1.7)

The findings reported above on attitudes towards spouse and children are neatly reflected in sizable correlations between happiness and the appreciation of one's family. People who are globally satisfied with their family appeared generally happier than those who are not. This was established in four investigations in Britain, Finland, the Netherlands and the US. The relationship between happiness and satisfaction with one's family appeared unaffected by 'gender', 'age' and 'social rank'.

An American study distinguished between 'members of the nuclear family' (spouse, children) and 'close adult relatives'. Not surprisingly happiness appeared more closely related to satisfaction with the former than to appreciation of the latter. The same investigation also distinguished between several aspects of family life. It found happiness almost as strongly related to satisfaction with 'mutual activities' as with 'agreement in money matters'.

Studies in Israel, the Netherlands, Poland and the US moreover showed happiness to be related to satisfaction with various other aspects of family-life as well.

Most investigations at hand used indicators of 'overall happiness'. The few that focused on 'hedonic level' yielded similar results.

d. Appreciation of one's friends (S 1.7.3)

Happiness was also found to be related to the global satisfaction with one's friends. Four studies found sizable correlations: one in the US, two in the Netherlands and one in Israel. Remarkably, a British investigation found no correlation.

Several elaborations were performed. Two American studies found the relationship stronger among people who were not very sociable, among persons who had problems with their families and among working people who disliked their job. Dutch and American investigations found no differences between males and females, or between young and old. Furthermore an American study found the relationship unaffected by 'social rank', 'marital status' and 'ethnic origin'. However, one of the Dutch studies found a somewhat stronger correlation in the lower social strata.

The Israeli study used indicators of both 'overall happiness' and 'hedonic level'. It found similar results.

e. Appreciation of people in general (P 1.8.2)

Two investigations in the Netherlands and four in the US related happiness to various indicators of *trust in people*. Only two investigations found significant correlations: both were among American high school pupils. The pupils who took a positive view of people turned out to be somewhat happier than those who did not. The other four investigations found slight positive relationships as well. Three of these found the correlation not significant however and one did not assess statistical significance. Contrary to expectation, happiness appeared no more closely related to trust in people among the unmarried than among married persons. No differences appeared in a specification by 'social rank' either. These studies involved indicators of 'overall happiness' as well as those of 'hedonic level'.

Furthermore an American investigation related hedonic level to the satisfaction with various aspects of contacts with people; among other things to satisfaction with 'admiration and respect by others', to satisfaction with 'chances of meeting nice people' and to satisfaction with 'privacy' allowed by others. It found strong positive correlations. (These latter findings are drawn from section S 1.7.4 in part III of the Databook).

7/6.3 APPRECIATION OF SOCIETY

From 'appreciation of people' let us proceed to 'appreciation of the social system'. Several investigators inspected whether differences in this respect matter much for happiness. All found positive correlations. However, the correlations were considerably lower than the ones reported in the preceding sections.

a. **Acceptance of the social system (D 1)**

Three investigations considered the correspondence between happiness and scores on so-called 'anomy' scales. The results are contradictory at first sight. Two found more anomy among unhappy persons, but one found no difference. This contradiction is probably due to the fact that the 'anomy' scales involved measured different issues.

A British study and a recent one in the Netherlands (Ormel, 1980:111) actually related happiness to 'dissatisfaction with society at large'. Typical items in their 'anomy' scales were. "The average man is probably worse off to-day than he ever was" and "At the present time there are no more values one can believe in". Both investigations found modest negative relationships, the British study with overall happiness and the Dutch one with hedonic level.

Another investigation in the Netherlands focused on dissatisfaction with the political system in particular. A typical item in its 'anomy' scale was: "Most politicians are incapable". Skepticism towards politics appeared slightly positively related to happiness. This suggests that dissatisfaction with the political system was less harmful than dissatisfaction with the wider society. The matter is worth further study; in particular its link with the earlier mentioned findings on 'political conservatism' and 'political extremism' mentioned in section 7/5.2a.

b. **Perceived freedom (F 2.2)**

In the foregoing chapter we met with evidence that people are happiest in the countries that allow most political freedom (Section 6/1.2a). Two studies also touched on the relationship between happiness and perceived freedom. One is a US survey which asked about the degree to which one feels 'free to

do what one likes'. It found strong correlations with all three happiness variants. Another investigation in the US found a higher hedonic level among people who were relatively satisfied with 'opportunities to alter things'. Unfortunately both investigations used rather vague questions.

c. Attitudes towards specific institutions

Some investigators took a glance at the relationship between happiness and the acceptance of specific institutions: 'the government', 'school', 'marriage', 'the health system' and 'religion'. All found positive correlations, though typically modest ones.

Government (N 1.1.2) An investigation in Israel related both overall happiness and hedonic level to satisfaction with the way in which the Israeli government handles various problems, such as 'economic problems', 'immigration problems' and 'security problems'. The correlations were typically positive though small. A study among American high-school boys found a more sizable relationship between overall happiness and global satisfaction with the government' in the US. These findings fit in well with the earlier observation that happy people do not reach out for political changes. (Section 7/5.2a.)

School (E 1.1.2) Two investigations in the US found students who hold a positive attitude towards education to be somewhat happier than those who do not. Firstly, a very detailed study among college students showed many modest correlations between hedonic level and 'perceived instrumentality of a college education' for various goals. Secondly, an investigation among high school boys demonstrated a somewhat stronger correlation between overall happiness and 'general acceptance of the school'.

Marriage (M 2.2) Representative investigations in the Netherlands and the US showed happy people to be far more positive in their judgement of the institution of marriage than unhappy ones. The American study assessed 'acceptance of marriage' by asking whether single people are generally less happy than married people. The Dutch study used a more global question. Remember that happy people in these countries were at that time more likely to be married and to enjoy the bond. (Demonstrated in section 6/4.1b.)

Health care (H 2.6) Studies in Canada, Israel and the US showed happiness to be slightly positively related to appreciation of the health care system. Hedonic level appeared to be somewhat higher among people reporting much 'faith in doctors'. Both overall happiness and hedonic level appeared positively related to 'global satisfaction with the local medical services'.

Religion (R 1.4) The same applies to satisfaction with religion. Studies in Britain and the US in the 1970's showed happy people to express relatively great satisfaction with 'comfort derived from religion'. Remember that religiousness as such is hardly related to happiness anymore in modern western society. (Demonstrated in section 7/5.2a).

d. Satisfaction with one's country (N 1.1)

The earlier mentioned worldwide investigation by Cantril (1965) related overall happiness to the global satisfaction with one's country. It found positive correlations, though not equally positive everywhere. In 1960 the correlations were strongest in (post-revolutionary) Cuba, the Dominican Republic, India, Japan and Western Germany. Less pronounced relationships appeared in Brazil, Egypt, Israel, Panama, the Philippines and Yugoslavia. In the US the relationship was lowest. Indicators of 'contentment' produced similar results as indicators of 'overall happiness'.

Several investigators assessed how happiness relates to satisfaction with various specific aspects of one's country. Happiness appeared most closely related to satisfaction with 'cost of living' and with welfare services' (Britain, Israel, US). Modest relations were observed between happiness and satisfaction with 'current standards and values in society' (US). Satisfaction with the 'mass-media' appeared unrelated to happiness (Israel, US).

7/6.4 APPRECIATION OF ONE'S SOCIAL POSITION

Happy people were typically more satisfied with their income and education than the unhappy and held relatively positive attitudes towards their work and to the voluntary organizations in which they participate. Happiness was in fact more strongly related to the appreciation of one's position in society than to the appreciation of society as such.

a. Appreciation of one's income

As we have seen in section 6/2.4, happiness is currently only modestly related to the *actual* level of income in most modern western nations. It turned out to be more closely related to the *appreciation* of this level of income.

Sufficiency (I 1.2) Happy people were more apt to characterize their income as 'sufficient' than unhappy persons. This was demonstrated in two Israeli studies and in an American one. Unfortunately none of these studies took the actual level of income into account.

Financial worries (I 1.5) Two American investigations found 'worrying about money' to be more frequent among unhappy people than among happy ones. Remember that unhappy people are more concerned about material matters anyway. (Demonstrated in section 7/4).

Feelings of being worse off (I 1.6) People who think they earn less than their friends or than people in other jobs appeared relatively unhappy as well. This was demonstrated in a Polish study and an American one. Again the investigations failed to verify the actual level of income.

Global satisfaction with income (S 1.8.3) Finally six investigations found positive correlations between happiness and global satisfaction with one's income. Two of these were performed in Britain, one in the Netherlands and four in the US. The correlations were quite sizable, both those with 'overall happiness' and with 'hedonic level'. In the US the correlation appeared somewhat stronger among Blacks and senior citizens. It was found to be equally strong among males and females. In the Dutch study it turned out to be relatively strong among young people and among the least educated.

b. Satisfaction with one's level of education (S 1.8.2)

Happiness appeared less closely linked to satisfaction with educational achievement. This was shown in a British study and in an Israeli one. The latter found almost identical correlations with both 'overall happiness' and 'hedonic level'. An American study among middle class people found the unhappy more apt to say they would have liked more education. (This latter finding is drawn from section H 2.3.2 of the Databook).

c. Global satisfaction with one's social position (S 1.8.1)

Only one investigation assessed the correlation between overall happiness and the global appraisal of one's social rank. This was a Dutch investigation. It found a strong positive relationship. This same investigation found happiness unrelated to social rank as such. (Reported earlier in section 6/2.7a)

7/6.5 APPRECIATION OF ONE'S WORK (S 1.9)

There is a wealth of data about the relationship between happiness and work attitudes. All indicate that happy people are more positive about their work than unhappy ones. When considering these data, the reader must bear in mind that happiness was only marginally related to working as such (section 6/4.1), to adherence to the Protestant Ethic (section 7/5.lc) or to present life goals on work (section 7/4.a,b).

a. Perceived characteristics of one's job (W 2.6)

Two Dutch investigations and a Polish one touched on the relationship between overall happiness and the appraisal of various aspects of one's job. Happy persons were shown to see their work more positively than unhappy ones. They perceive more 'security', more opportunity for 'development' and more 'freedom'. Happy persons also tended to characterize their work-load as more 'acceptable'. However, the differences were small and mostly not statistically significant.

b. Satisfaction with specific aspects of one's job (S 1.9.2)

Four investigations related happiness to satisfaction with specific aspects of one's work: two investigations in Canada, one in England and one in the US. The correlations were again positive though low; much lower than the correlations between happiness and global job-satisfaction to be presented below. The results are furthermore highly variable across populations. For example: two studies found a positive relationship between happiness and satisfaction with work-tasks', but two others did not. Likewise 'satisfaction with pay'

appeared positively related to happiness in one study, but unrelated to it in an other one. Investigations on the ingredients of job-satisfaction have typically yielded similarly chaotic results. Apparently not all aspects of work are equally crucial to all people in all conditions.

c. Global job-satisfaction (S 1.9.1)

Most attention was paid to the relationship between happiness and global satisfaction with one's job. This matter was considered in twenty investigations in six countries: two in Britain, one in Israel, one in Finland, three in the Netherlands, two in Poland and eleven in the US. All found strong correlations with both 'overall happiness' and 'hedonic level' the strongest statistical link being observed in the Netherlands.

Some investigations specified the relationship. In the US it turned out to be somewhat stronger among Whites than among Blacks and stronger among males than among females. In Finland it was also relatively pronounced among females, while a Dutch study found happiness to be more strongly related to job-satisfaction among unmarried people than among the married. Two investigations in the US found job-satisfaction of full-time housewives firmly related with both overall happiness and hedonic level.

In the Netherlands and in the US comparisons through time can be made. The correlation between happiness and job-satisfaction appears to have remained stable during the past few decades in these countries.

7/6.6 APPRECIATION OF LEISURE (S 1.1)

Happiness has also been related to the appreciation of leisure activities. As in the case of 'work' positive correlations appeared; in particular between happiness and the global appreciation of leisure.

a. Appreciation of leisure-time (S 1.1.2)

Four studies found happy people relatively satisfied with the available leisure time. One of these was performed in Finland, one in Britain and two in the US. The former two found a positive correlation with 'overall happiness', the

latter two with 'hedonic level'. The correlations appeared identical among males and females and between married and unmarried persons.

b. Appreciation of specific leisure activities (S 1.1.1)

One American investigation related overall happiness to various attitudes towards *sport*. It found happy people to take more pleasure in sports than unhappy people and less apt to characterize it as a waste of time. The differences were generally small and statistically insignificant.

As noted earlier in this section happiness was strongly related to the appreciation of *contacts with friends* (7/6.2d). Another thing worth mentioning is that an American study found a positive correlation between hedonic level and satisfaction with *organizational membership*. (Databook pt. III, section S 1.7.4).

c. Global satisfaction with leisure activity (S 1.1)

Happiness appeared strongly related to global satisfaction with leisure activities; even more strongly than to global satisfaction with 'work' and 'health'. High correlations were found in three American investigations as well as in investigations in Britain and Israel. The correlations were again equally strong among males and females. Once more there was no difference between correlations with overall happiness and those with hedonic level.

7/6.7 APPRECIATION OF ONE'S LIVING ENVIRONMENT

Studies on this matter all dealt with global satisfactions. The correlations with happiness are modest this time. Happiness appeared only modestly related to satisfaction with one's 'house' and the 'neighborhood'. The links with appreciation of 'local facilities', the 'local government' and the 'attractiveness of the town' turned out to be even less pronounced.

a. Satisfaction with one's house (S 1.2.1)

Eight investigations related happiness to global satisfaction with one's house.

Two of these were performed in Britain, one in Israel, three in the Netherlands and two in the US. All found positive correlations. In the Netherlands, happiness appeared more strongly related to satisfaction with housing among the unmarried than among married persons, and stronger at the lower end of the social ladder than at the top. Things appeared identical for young and old and for males and females in that country. In the US no difference was found between males and females. The Israeli study showed similar conditions with 'overall happiness' and 'hedonic level'.

b. Satisfaction with neighborhood (S 1.2.2, S 1.2.3)

Happiness appeared modestly related to satisfaction with various local facilities. Investigations in Canada, Israel and the US found slight correlations with satisfaction with 'shops' and satisfaction with 'recreational facilities'. Indicators of both 'overall happiness' and 'hedonic level' were involved.

Six investigations related happiness to 'global satisfaction with neighborhood': two in Britain, one in Israel, one in the Netherlands and two in the US. Somewhat stronger correlations appeared now: especially among the less educated both with indicators of 'overall happiness' and 'hedonic level'.

c. Satisfaction with various further aspects of living environment (S 1.2.4)

Happiness appeared positively related to the appreciation of various further aspects of the living environment as well. In Canada, for instance, it was found linked to the appreciation of the 'remoteness of the community'. Among males in particular it was furthermore related to satisfaction with 'the cost of living', 'the availability of houses', the 'attractiveness of the town' and 'the local government'. Once more measures of overall happiness and hedonic level appeared to work identically.

7/6.8 APPRECIATION OF ONE'S HEALTH (S 1.6)

Seven investigations related happiness to satisfaction with one's health: two in Britain, two in the Netherlands and three in the US. All found positive

correlations; the Dutch and the American studies found stronger ones than the British investigations.

One of the American studies found a stronger correlation among Whites than among Blacks. Another found no difference between males and females. A Dutch study found no difference between the sexes either. Nor did it find any differences with 'age'. However, another study in the Netherlands demonstrated relatively strong correlations among males and among elderly persons. This investigation also distinguished between people who are very concerned about their health and those who are not. Remarkably, happiness did not appear to be more closely linked to satisfaction with health among the former than among the latter.

All investigations used indicators of 'overall happiness', two American ones excepted which used indicators of 'hedonic level'. Though not entirely comparable, the results seem largely identical.

7/6.9 WHICH GLOBAL LIFE-ASPECT-SATISFACTIONS ARE MOST CLOSELY RELATED TO HAPPINESS?

So far it is evident that happy people are typically more positive about the various aspects of their life than unhappy people. It is also clear that the difference is not always equally strong, happiness being more closely related to the appreciation of some aspects of life than to others. As yet it has not been established which life-aspect-appreciations correspond most closely with (overall) happiness.

Not all the correlations that have been mentioned so far can be meaningfully compared, especially not the correlations between happiness and the so-called 'criterion-domain' evaluations. There is for example little sense in establishing that happiness is more closely related to 'trust in people' than to the appreciation of 'variety of the work-task'. Comparisons between correlations with 'global' domain-satisfactions is more useful. When establishing for instance that happiness is more closely related to global satisfaction with one's 'work' than to global satisfaction with 'the weather', we can infer that the former is a more central matter in life than the latter. Also, findings about correspondence between happiness and global domain-satisfactions are abundant. I will therefore limit the discussion to that area. When considering the differences in correlations we must realize that the various investigations used slightly different indicators of both happiness and the

domain-satisfactions involved and that they assessed the common variation by means of different statistical techniques. Yet it is worth noticing that the following three-step hierarchy appears:

a. The global hierarchy

The studies summarized so far found happiness generally most closely related to the degree of 'satisfaction with *intimate relations*'; especially to 'satisfaction with marriage'. Typically happiness appears almost as strongly related to satisfaction with *income*' and to satisfaction with *oneself*. The average of the correlations is around + .40. This is rather high, the intercorrelation between the various valid indicators of happiness being about + .50 (Data-book pt. III section H 1.1).

Happiness appeared more modestly related to the degree of satisfaction with *leisure*' and even less to 'satisfaction with *work* and satisfaction with *health*'. The average is now around + .30.

Least related to happiness were 'satisfaction with *living environment* and 'satisfaction with *one's country*'. The correlations were generally below + .20. This is not very impressive; the correlation between happiness and 'satisfaction with the weather' being at the same level.

So much for the relative strength of zero order correlations between happiness and global domain-satisfactions. These correlations may be partly spurious; the correlation between happiness and 'satisfaction with work' can for example be influenced by the relation between happiness and 'satisfaction with income'. Consequently several investigators tried to neutralize such effects by means of regression techniques, among others Andrews & Withey (1976, chapter 4) and Glenn & Weaver (1981:161/168): each on the basis of US data-sets. By and large the hierarchy remained.

b. Variation in the pattern

Another thing to keep in mind is that the data at hand almost all come from investigations in modern western nations. Hence it is by no means established that the hierarchy is a cross-cultural phenomenon. Furthermore, it represents an average of the rankings found so far. As such it may obscure various differences, e.g. differences between periods and social categories. Therefore it is

worthwhile taking a look at the investigations that involved several domain-satisfactions and comparing the resulting hierarchies. Unfortunately such comparisons are hampered by the fact that only a few investigations related happiness to a sizable set of these domain-satisfactions and that questions have been worded differently. Yet the following observations can be made:

Difference between nations. Nine investigations in five different nations assessed correlations between happiness and three or more global domain-satisfactions. Two of these were performed in Britain (Abrams & Hall, 1972; Hall, 1973), one in Israel (Levy & Guttman, 1975), one in Finland (Haavio-Mannila, 1971) three in the Netherlands (NIPO, 1949; Moser, 1969; Bakker, 1974) and two in the US (Wessman, 1956; Andrews, 1974). All were based on general population samples, except Moser's study in the Netherlands which was based on a city sample. The rankings that appeared parallel the hierarchy observed above. In all countries happiness was most closely related to 'satisfaction with intimate ties' and only modestly to 'satisfaction with city' and 'satisfaction with one's country'. Likewise a recent investigation in the EC countries and the US found a great similarity in the intercorrelation of life-aspect-satisfactions (Andrews & Inglehart, 1979).

Difference through time. In the Netherlands three more or less comparable investigations have been performed; in 1948, 1964 and 1970 respectively. Comparison shows increasing correlations between happiness and 'satisfaction with marriage'. Not only has the correlation grown stronger in an absolute sense, but it has also increased relatively to correlations between happiness and other domain-satisfactions. In 1948 happiness was still the most closely related to 'satisfaction with job' in the Netherlands, 'satisfaction with income' being second best. However, in 1964 'satisfaction with marriage' appeared at the top of the hierarchy, now followed by 'satisfaction with health', while 'satisfaction with income' dropped to the middle ranks. This finding has already been mentioned in the earlier discussion on the relation between happiness and 'satisfaction with other people'. (Section 7/6.2a). Elsewhere I discussed the matter in more detail (Veenhoven, 1983). Comparable investigations in the US are available for the period between 1971 and 1978 only (Campbell, 1981:241). During that decade the hierarchy remained unchanged.

Differences between social categories. Some recent investigations in the US demonstrated that the hierarchy is not identical in all social categories.

Bharadwaj & Wilkening (1977) showed that it was somewhat different among males than among females. Among males happiness was relatively strongly related to 'satisfaction with health' and to 'satisfaction with the community, while among women it was relatively strongly related to 'satisfaction with family'. Similarly, Harry (1976:392) found differences in ranking among people at different stages of the family lifecycle. The happiness of men in the later stage appeared to be less closely linked to 'satisfaction with income' and more closely related to 'satisfaction with work'. In Canada Michalos (1983: 233/236) observed gender differences as well. Obviously there may be differences between various further categories as well.

c. Why are not all life-aspect-satisfactions equally closely related to happiness?

It would seem evident that happiness is more closely related to some domain-satisfactions than to others, because people do not perceive all domains as equally important. Since they usually regard the quality of their marriage to be more important than the weather, their evaluations of life-as-a-whole would be geared more to satisfaction with the former than to satisfaction with the latter. This reasoning assumes that people do in fact evaluate their life-as-a-whole by calculating some weighted average of life-aspect-satisfactions. Andrews & Withey (1976:13) started from this assumption. However, they did not find empirical support for this view. To their astonishment they found that happiness correlates almost as well with simple sum scores of life-aspect-satisfactions as with more complex scores in which greater weight was given to the life-aspects the respondent had claimed to perceive as relatively important ones (p.115-130).

Another explanation could be that the differences are due to current notions about the good life, people being more apt to characterize themselves as happy when they are satisfied with those aspects of life that are generally depicted as most crucial. 'Family-life' ranking higher than, for instance, 'social justice' in the current western happiness ideology, 'satisfaction with marriage' could affect responses to happiness questions more than 'satisfaction with society'; even among people who personally see marriage as relatively unimportant in their life. This explanation does not appear very sound however. 'Health' for example was believed to be a prime source of happiness in the US in 1960 (Robinson & Shaver, 1973:16), while at that time 'satisfaction with health' ranked rather low in the hierarchy of domain-satisfactions. It is also

worth remembering that the Dutch became less inclined to see 'marriage' as a source of happiness during the last decade, while the correlation between happiness and 'satisfaction with marriage' has risen. (Reported in more detail in the sections 6/4.1 and 7/6.2a).

If not caused by variations in personally appraised importance of life aspects or by differences in their prominence in current happiness ideology, what then causes the overall evaluation of life to correspond more closely with the appreciation of some life-domains than with the appreciation of others? Possibly the differences are due to the fact that some domains are actually more crucial for the gratification of 'needs'. 'Family life' may for example govern the gratification of more urgent needs than 'work', or (as suggested in section 6/4.1) may at least hold a stronger monopoly. The quality of family life is then likely to matter more than working-conditions, and 'family-satisfaction' is thus more likely to parallel happiness than 'work-satisfaction'. These differences in the actual significance of domains of life need not be consciously recognized by the individual. He may even think that his happiness depends more on his work than on his family. Unfortunately this explanation meets with difficulties as well. It cannot account for the fact that 'satisfaction with income' was still closely linked to happiness in the Netherlands in the 1970's, while its correspondence with actual income differences had almost disappeared.

Presumably all these explanations uncover a part of the truth, it is as yet unclear which uncovers the greatest part.

7/7 SUMMARY

Many investigations inspected whether happy people are different from unhappy people. Various characteristics were considered, some of which indeed appeared more frequently among the former than among the latter. The abundant findings can be grouped in six main categories.

7/7.1 PERSONAL RESOURCES

Happy people appeared relatively well endowed with several characteristics that are generally helpful in coping with the problems of life.

Physical health. Happy people tended to enjoy better health. They felt healthier, were shown to be in better condition by medical examinations and appeared to to-live longer. These differences seem reasonably sound. There is evidence that they stem from both effects of happiness on health and effects of health on happiness. As for the latter effect, there are indications that poor health lowers appreciation of life indirectly by hampering economic activity and social contacts. Probably it also affects happiness directly, in particular hedonic level.

General mental effectiveness. Happy people scored lower on mental impairment inventories than the unhappy and higher on indicators of 'positive mental health' and 'mental maturity'. The differences could be somewhat inflated by bias, contamination and spuriousness. They are probably partly due to effects of happiness on mental effectiveness. Obviously mental effectiveness can contribute to happiness as well. It increases the chances of creating satisfying living conditions (good job, involvement in voluntary organizations, close intimate networks) and it benefits the development of several happiness nurturing personal characteristics, such as good health, the belief that one is in control of one's lot and the selection of realistic aspirations.

Specific abilities. Happy people were better at getting on with other people. They were found to be more 'open', 'warm', 'empathic' and 'tactful' and at the same time more 'influential'. These differences may be inflated somewhat by contamination and spuriousness. Yet there is little doubt that a genuine link exists. Not only can happiness sometimes influence the development of social skills, but it is also obvious that these skills are crucial to the maintenance of intimate contacts, which appeared crucial for happiness.

Contrary to expectation, happy people were not more intelligent than the unhappy; at least not in modern western nations, as far as test-intelligence' was concerned. Remember that level of school-education was found unrelated to happiness as well in several modern nations.

Activity. Happy persons appeared to distinguish themselves from the unhappy by a greater activity level. They were not only more involved in various tasks, but also felt more energetic. Their greater activity was not paralleled by more complaints about time-pressure. It has not been established to what extent these differences are artefactual. However, there is experimental evidence that suggests that they are at least partly due to the effects of happiness, positive affect enhancing activity and negative affect slowing it down.

Possibly high activity can also add to a greater appreciation of life, among other things by fostering chances in the realms of work and intimate relations. As yet there is no independent evidence for such effects.

Richness of mental life Studies among intellectuals in western nations do not suggest that the happy enjoy more differentiated affective experiences than the unhappy, nor that they perceive outward reality more completely or articulately. At best there are indications that happy people are somewhat more independent in their appraisals. It is not certain that these findings will stand tests for spuriousness and curvilinearity.

7/7.2 PERSONALITY

Happiness was also found to be related to some traits that have less evident consequences for success in coping. Most investigations on this matter were performed in western nations; more than half concern American students.

Perceived fate-control. Happy people appeared more inclined to believe that they can influence their lot than unhappy ones. Consistent differences of this kind appeared at least in the US. These differences can be artefactual to some extent. It is also possible that they are partly due to the effects of happiness on fate-control beliefs. Yet experimental evidence leaves no doubt that believing oneself to be in control of one's lot can add to the enjoyment of life.

Defensive strategies. Investigations among students in the US showed happy students to be more inclined to react to threatening information by 'reversal' and 'intellectualization' and unhappy ones by 'projection', 'turning against others' and 'turning against self'. The happy and the unhappy did not differ in inclination to defensive 'repression'. Insofar as they are trustworthy, these findings suggest that self-deceit is not always detrimental to happiness, but that it depends on how one deceives oneself. Yet it is not certain that reality evasion is really that harmless. Its long term costs may not have manifested themselves fully among the young people investigated here. Neither is it clear why some defensive strategies are more frequent among the happy and others among the unhappy. Possibly it is because 'reversal' and 'intellectualization' are particularly suited to obscure unpleasant affects, but do not interfere too strongly with the appraisal of external reality, while 'projection' and 'turning

against others' involve a greater loss of reality command and moreover hamper contacts with other people.

Tendency to like things or not. Studies among American students found generally cheerful subjects a little more apt to react to neutral stimuli with pleasant thoughts. However, they were not more inclined to like odors. The difference in pleasantness of thought-reactions may mean both that cheerful students have more pleasant reminiscences and that an inclination to react positively results in more pleasure in life. As yet it has not been established which effect prevails. If operant at all, the latter is likely to have a greater impact on 'contentment' than on 'hedonic level'.

Time-orientation. Various aspects of time-orientation have been considered in relation to happiness. e.g. 'time-extension', the tendency to dwell either in the past, the present or the future, characteristic ways of 'organizing' one's time, to experienced 'time-pressure' and perceived 'swiftness' of time. There is little consistency in the findings; probably because the curvilinear relationships at hand here were not adequately reflected in correlation-coefficients and because the links are highly variable across situations. Just yet the findings do not suggest that happiness is favored by a 'broad time span' nor by a strong orientation on the 'future' or by a tendency to live in the 'here- and-now'.

7/7.3 LIFESTYLE

Contrary to the suggestions of some ascetic moralists, happy people do not distinguish themselves from the unhappy by living more 'laboriously' or more 'soberly'. They were shown to have an open eye for pleasures and appeared in fact to be more involved in various leisure activities; in particular in outdoor entertainments and sports.

No great differences in consumption patterns appeared either; at least not insofar as eating habits, smoking or drinking are concerned. One investigation among American students in 1970 found drug users (marijuana, amphetamines, barbiturates) less 'satisfied' with life relatively, but not less 'cheerful'.

Investigations on differences in sleeping habits found no significant differences.

These findings do not imply that lifestyles are entirely irrelevant to happiness. The data cover only a few lifestyle variables in a few populations and it is not certain

that they will stand up to tests for spuriousness or curvilinearity.

7/7.4 LONGINGS

Investigations in various nations showed the aspirations and goals of happy people to center on matters of 'character', 'family', 'health' and 'pleasure'. Happy people also appeared relatively concerned about matters of 'value' and solution of 'social problems'. On the other hand, a relatively great number of unhappy people reached out for 'change'; in particular for improvement of their 'economic situation'. These differences can not yet be relied upon, as they have not been sufficiently checked. If tenable they may mean that happy people tend to select other aims than the unhappy. They may also mean that some aims are more rewarding than others, e.g. because they are better 'attainable', or correspond more closely with 'real needs'. Apart from the desire for 'change' it is largely unclear what effects are actually involved in these differences.

7/7.5 CONVICTIONS

Some investigations in western nations inspected whether happy people hold different convictions than unhappy ones. The few differences they found were mostly small and variable across time and social categories.

Values. There are indications that happy people take a relatively great interest in moral issues and that they are relatively apt to feel that their values are shared by others. However, these differences did not appear in all populations studied.

There are equally inconsistent indications that happy people grant priority to other value principles than unhappy ones. Happy American students appeared to lay more emphasis on 'pleasure' and 'social virtues', while their unhappy colleagues stressed 'rationality', 'independence' and 'self control'. The greater emphasis on 'hedonic values' by the happy students was confirmed in some investigations among different populations, but emphasis on 'social values' was not. Similarly, happiness appeared related to adherence to the 'Protestant Ethic' among skilled workers in the US, but not among students. The case of hedonic values excepted, these findings are again hard to account for.

Religion. Investigations in the Netherlands and the US showed that happy people were typically more religious than unhappy people in the 1940's. In the decades that followed this difference withered, however. Insofar as it still exists, the differences are currently greatest among women, elderly persons and the less well educated. There is no certainty that the difference is not spurious. Neither is it clear to what extent the difference is due to the affects of (un)happiness on religious involvement. Probably the original difference reflected some positive effects of religiousness; possibly a softening of existential problems, and perhaps also attendant benefits in the realm of economic support and intimate contacts. These effects are likely to have withered when churches lost ground in western society.

In contemporary western nations there are no differences in happiness between members of different churches. However, in Nigeria in 1960 Muslims appeared happier than Christians and Christians happier than Pagans. None of these findings have been sufficiently tested for spuriousness as yet.

Conventionality of outlook. Some stray findings suggest that happy people tend to feel more attracted by the political right and the center than by the political left. There are also indications that happy students in the 1960's were somewhat more conservative in matters of sexuality than unhappy ones. However, investigations in the 1970's did not show happy college educated women to hold more feministic sex-role attitudes. The findings have not yet been sufficiently tested. If they should stand checks, the slight differences could mean either that happiness fosters conservatism or that conservative standards characteristically allow a more positive evaluation of life as it is.

Views on happiness. Happy and unhappy people were found to differ in some convictions about happiness itself. Happy Americans appeared to attribute happiness to different causes than unhappy people did. These differences parallel with the above mentioned findings on differences in longings between happy and unhappy persons.

Happy Americans were also shown to be more apt to approve of happiness and pleasure morally. This may be due to a tendency on the part of happy people to praise themselves. It may also mean that happiness facilitates the development of a lust-acceptant outlook. Still another possibility is that moral approval of pleasure adds to the enjoyment of life. It could do so directly by not burdening the individual with notions of sin and by allowing full awareness of pleasurable experiences. It could also work indirectly by

preventing people to disregard internal hedonic signals and thereby harming themselves in the long run.

Appreciations.

While happiness is the appreciation of life-as-a-whole, it is obviously related to the appreciation of various aspects of life. However, it is not equally strongly related to all of them. In Western nations at least, happiness appeared most closely linked to 'satisfaction with intimate relations', to 'satisfaction with income' and to 'satisfaction with oneself'. It was generally somewhat less closely linked to 'satisfaction with leisure' and, to 'satisfaction with health'. Smallest of all appeared its links to 'satisfaction with one's living environment' and 'satisfaction with one's country'. This hierarchy is not wholly identical in all social categories. In the Netherlands it has changed through time; 'satisfaction with marriage' having become an increasingly prominent predictor of happiness during the post-war decades. As yet it is not fully clear why happiness is not equally closely linked to satisfaction with all aspects of life.

CHAPTER 8

ANTECEDENTS OF HAPPINESS

The two preceding chapters dealt with matters that coincide with happiness. This one will cast a glance at some that precede it. As we will see only a few investigators considered the relationship between (present) happiness and life-history variables as yet. Hence this chapter will be very short.

As in the case of concurrent variables, antecedent ones can be distinguished into two main categories: 'living conditions' and 'personal characteristics'. The occasional data concern for the greater part earlier 'living conditions'. They will be reviewed in section 8/1. It will appear that the quality of most of these findings is dubious. Next, section 8/2 will present some stray observations about differences in earlier 'personal characteristics' between presently happy and unhappy persons.

Like the two foregoing chapters, this one draws on the Databook and does not present all the findings in full detail. Only some studies published after 1975 are mentioned by name.

8/1 HAPPINESS AND EARLIER LIVING CONDITIONS

Of the few investigations that dealt with the relationship between present happiness and earlier living conditions, most focused on conditions in youth;

especially on family conditions. These investigations provide some support for the view that 'deprivation' in youth is detrimental to later happiness. However, not all 'deprivations' appear to be equally harmful (8/ 1.1). In this connection we will meet with some research on the effect of earlier 'lifestress' in adulthood. 'Stressful life-events' will appear largely irrelevant to happiness; at least insofar as no exceptional distress was incurred (8/1.2).

8/1.1 CONDITIONS IN YOUTH

Most data in this field concern 'family conditions', e.g. 'treatment by one's parents' and 'characteristics of the family'. Furthermore there are some observations on the effects of 'poverty' in youth and on 'confrontation with war' in that phase of life.

a. **Treatment by one's parents**

It is widely recognized that affectionate treatment in the first phase of life is essential to a healthy development of primates, humans in particular. It is therefore evident that 'warm' and 'supportive' parents would stand a better chance of raising happy children than 'cold' and 'demanding' ones. As we will see this does indeed seem to be the case.

Perceived treatment by one's parents. Three American investigations considered the relation between present happiness and reminiscences of parental behavior. Two focused on the overall happiness of male students and high school boys respectively. They found profound positive relationships, both with the perceived support of the parents and the perceived degree of discipline. A small study among male college students found hedonic level hardly linked with recalled treatment.

Perceived support. (F 1.1.3) The former two studies found the happiest youngsters most inclined to describe their parents as 'warm' and 'affectionate', both their mothers and their fathers. The happy also claimed to feel 'close' to their parents more often than the unhappy.

Perceived freedom. (F 2.1) Happy youngsters appeared less inclined to characterize their parents as 'dominant' than the unhappy. They more often claimed to feel 'free' in following their own interests and to be 'allowed a say in decisions affecting the family'. At the same time they also perceived their parents as more 'sure in disciplining' their children.

Actual parental behavior (F 1.1.3.2). An obvious weakness of the above investigations is that parental behavior was assessed retrospectively by grown-up children. Retrospective ratings are very liable to distortion, particularly when made by the parties involved. As yet only one study assessed the behavior of parents directly. This was a twenty year longitudinal investigation among 54 mothers in Berkeley, US. (Reported by Shaefer & Bailey, 1963). The behavior of these mothers was systematically observed by trained judges who visited them regularly at home. The judges also assessed the hedonic level of the babies at these occasions. They did so on the basis of observation of expressive behavior: babies who laughed much were rated as feeling 'happy' and babies who cried a lot as 'unhappy'. Unfortunately hedonic level was assessed during the first three years only, in spite of the fact that the children were followed until adulthood. Thus the results tell us little about the long-term effects of parental behavior on happiness. Nevertheless the findings are interesting enough to be mentioned.

Hedonic level appeared firmly higher among babies who were 'loved' by their mothers than among those who were not. It was also relatively high among the ones whose mothers were most 'involved' emotionally and who tended to treat the child as 'an equal'. On the other hand, hedonic level appeared to be lower among babies whose mothers perceived them as a 'burden', 'ignored' them and 'displayed little respect' for the child's own preferences and perceptions; in particular among the mothers who tended to 'suppress its aggression'. It was also lower among children of mothers who made frequent use of 'control by fear and punishment'. Not surprisingly the happiest babies were generally most "liked" by their mothers.

It is worth noting that the correlations between baby-happiness and maternal behavior appeared to grow stronger as time went by. During infancy the correlations were rather low. They did not reach the level of significance until the babies were two years old.

Some aspects of maternal behavior worked out differently for boys and girls. Restriction of 'autonomy' by the mother went together with low hedonic level among little boys, but hardly among little girls. The latter even tended to feel happier with mothers who fostered 'dependency' Unlike the

boys, they also tended to be happier if the mother displayed a 'high emotional involvement' and a strong tendency towards keeping the child closely attached to herself.

Personality of the mother (F 1.1.3.2). The same investigation showed a similar correspondence between the hedonic level of the babies and certain personality characteristics of the mothers. Positive correlations appeared with the mothers' 'cooperativeness' and 'intelligence', whereas negative correlations showed up with the mothers' 'punitiveness', 'rigidity', 'irritability', 'anxiousness', 'depressiveness' and 'variability of mood'. Again the correlations became more pronounced as the child grew older. It is a great pity that the happiness of these children was not assessed again in later phases of this investigation.

b. Family of origin (F 1.1.)

The treatment by one's parents depends to some extent on the family system: e.g. on its size, its completeness, its cohesiveness and its peacefulness. Family characteristics may have direct effects on development as well. As yet only a few investigations have taken a look at the matter.

Only child. There is a rich folklore about only children. Parents are supposed to spoil them, protect them too much, foster dependence, etc. As a result only children are said to end up as unhappy loners. (Thompson et al., 1974:95/96 on the basis of an unspecified sample in the US). Yet comparison between adult Americans who grew up with siblings and without did not reveal any difference in current happiness (Polit et al., 1980:102)

Illness and death in the family (F 1.1.2, F 1.1.4). An investigation among adults in the US found hedonic level somewhat lower among persons who reported long and serious illness in the family during their childhood. Another found relatively low overall happiness among adult Americans who had lost one of their parents by death before they had reached the age of 16. This latter difference was not statistically significant.

Divorce (F 1.1.2). Americans who witnessed a divorce of their parents before the age of 16 appeared less happy on an average than Americans whose parents had stayed together. This was shown in two representative investigations

among adults in 1957 and 1972, which both focused on overall happiness. The latter investigation is in fact the same one that found slightly less overall happiness among persons who had lost a parent through death. The difference between the ones who had experienced parental divorce and those who had not was greater than the difference between the ones who had lost a parent by death and those who had not.

The 1957 study was repeated in 1976. Again people with a broken home background appeared less happy, but the difference was smaller now (Kulka & Weingarten, 1979:57). This may indicate that the negative effects of divorce have softened somewhat in that society.

Kulka & Weingarten specified the relationship by age'. In both samples relatively strong differences among young adults appeared (p.56). Apparently the negative effects of parental divorce levels off in the course of time. It is hence not surprising that three other American studies among students and high school pupils still found subjects with a broken-home background relatively unhappy.

Perceived quality of one's parents' marriage (F 1.1.3.1). US adults who feel that their parents had a satisfying marriage when they were young, appeared to report higher hedonic levels than those who look back on an unhappy marriage of their parents. Similarly, happy American students were more positive about the marriage of their parents than unhappy ones.

Unfortunately there are hardly any investigations that related the happiness of children to evaluations of marital success by the parents themselves. All there is, is a stray observation from the earlier mentioned Berkeley Development Study, which found no relation between the hedonic level of babies at three years of age and an estimate of the quality of their parents' marriage ten years later.

Past sibling conflict (F 1.1.4). A further family characteristic that was related to present happiness is the reported frequency of conflicts with one's brothers and sisters. An investigation among American college students found this negatively related (though not significantly) to hedonic level.

c. **Socio-economic conditions during youth**

The above discussed influences of parental behavior and family characteristics are sometimes affected by wider environmental conditions, such as economic

prosperity and political stability. These conditions may affect the development of children in more direct ways as well. Unfortunately there are hardly any data about such environmental antecedents of happiness. All I found are some stray correlations with 'poverty' and 'confrontation with war'.

Poverty. It has been suggested that growing up in poverty is detrimental to later happiness. This view was not confirmed in an investigation among adult Americans who had experienced the Great Depression when young. The ones that remembered the most poverty even appeared slightly more contented relatively (Elder, 1974:242). There are no investigations on the effect of earlier poverty on 'overall happiness' or 'hedonic level'.

Surprisingly there is not much research either on the relationship between the happiness of children and the current prosperity of their parents. The matter has been touched on in an investigation among high school pupils in New York State in 1960. This study found no link between the happiness of these kids and the income of their father. It did not find any correlation either with the 'social rank' of the family (as estimated on the basis of: the educational level of father and mother, the job-prestige of the father, possessions in the home and number of rooms per person). However, the happiness of these youngsters did appear related to their own estimate of the social prestige level their family belongs to. This matter was discussed in more detail in section 6/2.7b.

Confrontation with war (W 1.1). Three years after World War II, female students in England, Germany and the US were questioned about their overall happiness. The ones from countries that had been closest to the war scene, appeared to be least happy. In Germany there were similar differences between students from Berlin and from Gottingen. The former city was bombed heavily during the war, while the latter had been largely saved. As we will see below, confrontation with warfare in later phases of life has long-term detrimental effects as well. These findings correspond with the earlier observation in section 6/ 1.3a that, after World War II, the average happiness was lowest in the countries that suffered most.

a. Discussion

All these observations seem to fit in well with the notion that a sunny childhood breeds happy adults. Yet we must again recognize that the statistical differences may reflect other effects as well.

Artefacts? There are good reasons for questioning the reliability of most of these data. The greater part is not based on any impartial assessment of conditions in youth, but on the subjective reminiscences of it by the subjects themselves. These reminiscences are obviously open to all sorts of bias; among other things to bias by present happiness. Remember that there are indications that happy people are more apt to remember pleasant things (Shown in section 7/2.3). Moreover unhappy people could be inclined to perceive more shortcomings in their youth: an unhappy childhood being an accepted explanation of current problems. For another reason we must be cautious with the longitudinal investigation among mothers and their babies. Outward cheerfulness at three years of age is not the same as adult happiness. At best the phenomena are correlated; probably not even very strongly.

This leaves us with only three seemingly more dependable findings: firstly that adult Americans who witnessed death of one of their parents when young, were slightly less happy than average (the difference, however, being not significant), secondly that offspring of divorced parents appeared relatively unhappy as well (though the difference has decreased during the last decades) and thirdly that children raised in war stricken countries were, some years after World War II, still less happy than children in other nations. However, these findings are not beyond suspicion either, because they can be spurious. The lower happiness of people with a broken-home background could, for instance, be due to an overrepresentation of problematic parents in this category. Similarly it is possible, that the relatively low happiness of adolescents in war stricken countries after World War II was largely due to cultural differences rather than to consequences of warfare. Twenty years after World War II Germans and Italians were still relatively unhappy.

A last possibility to note is that some of the correlations reflect not only 'antecedence' but also coincidence. The correlation between present happiness and past treatment by one's parents might for example be due to fine family life in childhood resulting in the maintenance of close family contacts in adulthood. Remember that happiness has been found firmly related to current contacts with relatives. (Demonstrated in section 6/4.3). Similarly, the unhappiness of children reared in war stricken countries may have been due to the fact that their countries were still relatively disorganized. It is once more unspecified to what extent these objections do or do not apply.

Could happiness affect living conditions in youth? Obviously present happiness cannot be held responsible for the quality of one's youth. However,

present happiness could be a continuation of childhood happiness, or even a manifestation of some basic disposition to like things or not. Such characteristics are probably not without consequences for children: especially not for their acceptance by intimates. Remember the experiments cited in section 6/4.1e, showing that cheerful people meet more sympathy. In this vein one can imagine that cheerful babies elicited more affective behaviors in their mothers than whiners, and that good-humored kids were more liked by their family and peers than depressed ones. It is not impossible either that unhappy and difficult children burden marital relations. (Discussed in section 6/4.2c). There are again no indications about the size of such effects.

How could childhood conditions affect present happiness? Though not convincingly demonstrated as yet, it is nevertheless likely that deprivations in youth can affect later happiness negatively. Some deprivations at least have been observed to foster the development of personal characteristics which we saw to be detrimental to happiness. There is, for example, much evidence that 'affective deprivation' in early life and 'lack of stability in the intimate environment' are generally harmful to the 'physical health' of children and may also foster the development of various 'mental disturbances'; contact disturbances; in particular. See for example Veenhoven (1979), Rohner (1980) and Tonnie and Tausch (1980). The foregoing chapter has shown that harm to 'physical health' does involve a lowering of happiness and that 'mental impairment's' are at least likely to do so. (Sections 7/ 1.1 and 7/1.2 respectively). There is also evidence that a bad start may break 'vitality' lower 'self-confidence', create 'distrust in people' and foster a 'tendency to react aversely towards anything'. As such it is likely to reduce the appreciation of life as well. (See sections 7/1.4, 7/2.1, 7/6.2 and 7/2.3 respectively).

8/ 1.2 EARLIER CONDITIONS IN ADULTHOOD

In the same vein deprivations in adulthood have been depicted as undermining forces and hence as a menace to happiness. However, the few studies that tried to demonstrate this did not provide much evidence for lasting negative effects on happiness. The investigations concerned were all framed in 'stress' theory, which holds that excessive' environmental demands can bring harm to the organism: both physically and psychically. One of the

problems with this theory is that it is hard to draw an accurate picture of the 'demands' that have been on the scene and that it is generally impossible to establish whether these were actually 'excessive' or not. This latter point is crucial; challenges the individual can cope with adequately may foster his strength rather than harm him and may thus contribute to happiness in the long run instead of reducing it. Another problem is that the limits of what a person can bear are not the same for everybody. What is too heavy for one person, may be a stimulating challenge for another. Situational variations influence these limits as well. It is probably for these reasons that the few investigations on this matter yielded different results. Studies that focused on the amount of every-day challenges in earlier periods did not find appreciable correlations with current happiness. Only two investigations that focused on the long-term effects of imprisonment in a concentration camp found a pronounced negative effect.

a. Everyday challenges (L 1.2)

Five investigations looked into the effect of earlier 'life changes' on present happiness. Three of these were performed in the US, one in England and one in the Netherlands. The latter investigation assessed the effects on overall happiness, the other four focused on differences in hedonic level. Contrary to the suggestion of Holmes & Rahe (1967), people who went through many changes (moving, marriage, change of work, etc.) appeared no less happy than people who experienced fewer changes.

Two other American studies related happiness to specific changes. One related overall happiness to 'geographic mobility in the past ten years' and found the variables unrelated. The other related hedonic level to 'major changes in health during the last two years' and found a slight negative relationship. However, this latter relationship is probably due to ill health rather than to the stress of change as such.

Recently Ormel (1980) reported a more sophisticated investigation in this tradition. In this investigation 'life-stress' during the past years was rated by judges. Ratings were based on estimates of the effects problems and events would have on the average Dutchman of the same age and sex in a similar position. These ratings appeared to be closely linked to hedonic level; the least burdened respondents feeling best. This correlation appeared largely due to common variance with some personality variables. Yet after checks a modest correlation still remained. This study also involved a longitudinal

analysis. One year later the subjects were rated again and it was established whether their life had become easier or more difficult. Such changes appeared also modestly related to hedonic level, the effects of deterioration or amelioration being greatest among the initially most burdened persons (p. 231-236).

b. Emigration (N 2.2)

Moving to another country usually involves considerable demands. In an investigation among elderly people in Boston, hedonic level indeed appeared to be lower among immigrants than among those who have been born in the US. However, this difference disappeared when checked for 'income'. Impairments are hence unlikely to be involved. Neither do these data suggest that these immigrants represent a particular happy or unhappy selection.

c. Concentration camps (W 1.1)

Two investigations dealt with the long term effects of extremely stressful environmental conditions. Both concern Jewish survivors of German concentration camps during World War II. The atrocious conditions imposed on these people appeared to have harmed them for good. A survey in Israel in 1968 found women who had been imprisoned in such camps to be less happy than Israeli women of the same age who had not. In the US, Leon et al. (1981:512) compared 52 Jewish people who had been in a concentration camp or who had survived in ghettos or in hiding, with a control group of 29 Jewish persons of similar European and religious background. They also found the former to take less pleasure in life than the latter, though the difference was smaller in this case. This smaller difference may indicate that time healed the wounds to some extent: the holocaust being further away in the past for the subjects in the American study than for those in the Israeli one. The difference may also be due to the fact that the studies did not compare identical categories.

d. Discussion

It is once more noted that correlation between happiness and exposure to stressful life-events does not necessarily mean that the latter determines

the former. Apart from the ever present possibility of statistical distortion, it may be due to the tendency of unhappy people to let themselves in for more problems. This may be so at least in insofar as the individual was responsible, which is obviously not the case with the Jews in German death camps. Insofar as the amount of every day challenges is indeed detrimental to happiness, it may be so because of its effects on, among other things, 'physical health' and 'mental effectiveness'.

8/2 HAPPINESS AND EARLIER PERSONAL CHARACTERISTICS

As we have seen in chapter 7, many investigators related happiness to 'present' personal characteristics. Surprisingly none of the investigations performed so far dealt systematically with its relation to 'former' ones. There are no data on the correspondence of adult happiness to, for instance, 'temperament' in infancy, 'health' in childhood or 'self-acceptance' during adolescence. All there is are some stray findings on 'earlier prettiness', 'earlier life goals' and 'past happiness'. It will suffice to mention them shortly.

a. Good looks

Me Kinley-Runyan (1980:58) rated the 'prettiness in teenage years' of adult American females on the basis of high school pictures. The ones who had been prettiest in their teens appeared to be slightly happier at 38 years of age. Though the difference was small, it is interesting. It cannot be attributed to the usual sources of distortion and obviously it is not possible either that the current happiness of these women made them look better in their teens. At best the happiest women may have been happier in their teens already. Possibly they therefore looked more cheerful when the pictures were taken and were for that reason rated as prettier. However, this reasoning involves three steps which are all rather uncertain. Firstly, we will see below that the link between happiness in youth and in adulthood is probably modest (section 8/2c). Secondly, we have seen in section 4/2.3a that the relationship between facial expression and the self-reports of happiness is quite modest as well. In the third place, it has not been established that cheerful faces are

currently considered the most beautiful. All in all, the difference is probably largely due to effects of prettiness on the enjoyment of life. It is an established fact that pretty people meet more 'social acceptance' in the contemporary US (Wortman & Loftus, 1981:557/558). Physical attractiveness can thus add to happiness by facilitating 'contacts' with colleagues and friends and by fostering 'marriage chances'. (The relevance of these matters for happiness was demonstrated in the sections 6/4.3 and 6/4.1a respectively.) Good looks can moreover contribute to the development of personal characteristics that promote happiness, such as 'self esteem' and 'control belief'. (Happiness consequences discussed in sections 7/6.1b and 7/2.1)

b. Earlier life goals

An earlier mentioned investigation by myself in the Netherlands (Veenhoven, in preparation) asked about the goals one had in mind when entering adulthood. It appeared that happy people had pursued somewhat different goals than the unhappy. The differences were globally similar to the differences in present life goals between happy and unhappy people. (Discussed in section 7/4b). However, the differences were less pronounced.

A different pattern appears where 'work' is concerned. The happy reported more past goals in this field, whereas we have seen in section 7/4 that they report less present aims on the matter. This would suggest that a hard-working-life is no more satisfying in the short-term, but nevertheless pays in the long run. (At least in this Dutch population and insofar as aims are put into practice). The happy had more frequently aimed at hedonic matters such as 'happiness' and various 'sensory experiences'. As we have seen in section 7/4 present strivings of this kind are more frequent among the happy as well. On the other hand unhappy people had focused more on 'intra-psyche' matters, especially on goals concerning 'identity'. They reported more present goals of that kind as well. Earlier stirrings in the realm of 'ideals', 'achievement' and 'health' appeared equally frequent among happy and unhappy persons.

As in the case of present longings, these differences can be distorted by spuriousness. Similar factors may be involved. Insofar as they are valid, they can once more be due to effect of happiness. Not only can earlier happiness have guided the choice of earlier life goals, but also present happiness may also color the reminiscence of it.

c. Past happiness (H 1.4)

Four investigations assessed the correspondence between present happiness and the appreciation of life some years ago. Not surprisingly all found positive correlations.

Retrospective report of happiness (H 1.4.1). Two American investigations inquired about overall happiness as it was five years ago. One was among a general population sample and the other among a class of students. Both found rather modest correlations with present 'overall happiness' ($r = + .36$, resp. $r = + .27$). The population study found also a small correlation with present 'contentment' ($r = + .18$), while the one among students found past overall happiness unrelated to present 'hedonic level'. Possibly these correlations are so low because retrospective reports do not reflect earlier happiness adequately. There is good reason for thinking so. A forty year follow-up study among parents in Berkeley US, found increasingly positive answers to one and the same question about 'happiness in childhood' as the respondents grew older (Field, cited in Krech et al., 1981 :41).

Longitudinally observed happiness (H 1.4.2). In section 3/ 1c I have reported some findings about the test-retest reliability of happiness questions. The investigations concerned covered periods of up to eight months. Two investigations involved longer periods. One among American students related present hedonic level to overall happiness as assessed two years ago. Overall happiness had been measured by means of questions as well as by a clinical rating. Both these indicators of past happiness appeared to be closely linked to present hedonic level ($r = + .67$, resp. $+ .71$). Recently Atkinson (1982 20) followed a representative panel of Canadians during two years. The test-retest correlations of his indicators of overall happiness were somewhat lower, ranging from $r = + .39$ to $r = + .53$. The correlation appeared slightly stronger among respondents who reported no changes during the period concerned.

Discussion. Insofar as they are valid, these findings can be interpreted as indicating that people tend to stick to once formed evaluations of life. Judgements may crystallize into stable attitudes which remain unquestioned if no great changes occur. Yet the results can also be taken to mean that continuous re-evaluations tend to result in similar conclusions. In the light of the foregoing chapters that would not seem improbable. We have seen that happiness depends on rather stable elements of life; among other things on

the characteristics of society (section 6/1), on one's place therein (section 6/2), and on various rather continuous personal resources and traits (sections 7/1 and 7/2). Still another interpretation of the same data can be that happiness tends to amplify itself, earlier enjoyment of life strengthening the basis for later happiness, for instance by fostering 'health' and by encouraging the establishment of 'intimate ties'. (Indications that happiness can work that way were discussed in sections 7/1.1 and 6/4.1 respectively). These three interpretations do not exclude one another. It is as yet not clear which account for most of the correspondence.

8/3 SUMMARY

Only a few investigations looked into the antecedents of happiness. Most of these focused on earlier living conditions, while some stray ones took a glance at earlier personal characteristics.

Earlier living conditions. Several investigations inspected the link between current happiness and *conditions in youth* especially the relationship with 'family conditions'. It appeared that currently unhappy people met with a relatively great amount of instability in their youth; 'illness', 'death', 'conflict' and 'divorce' being more frequent in their family histories. There are also indications that contacts with their parents were less affectionate relatively. Disruptions at the level of society sometimes appeared predictive for later happiness as well. People raised near scenes of World War II appeared to be less happy later on. However, people who grew up in poverty during the Great Depression did not. Most results tie up nicely with the current view that children need affection and stability in order to grow up to be happy adults. Yet several are open to other interpretations as well.

Some other investigations dealt with *stressful life events* in adulthood. Contrary to expectations, most did not find more such events in the life histories of presently unhappy persons. This indicates that challenges do not always involve harm; manageable ones may rather foster growth. Only the horrors of Nazi concentration camps seemed to have been excessive enough to depress the appreciation of life lastingly.

Earlier personal characteristics. As yet hardly any investigations have looked at the relationship between current happiness and earlier personal resources, personality traits, lifestyles, convictions or appreciations. One study found *good looks* at high school age predictive of later happiness among American women. An other found some *life goals* more prevalent *in* the life histories of happy Dutchmen ('work', 'study' and 'enjoyment').

Several investigations documented that current happiness is linked with *past happiness*. That can mean either that people tend to stick to once formed evaluations, or that re-evaluations tend to result in similar conclusions mostly, because they draw on rather stable characteristics of life. It may also indicate that happiness tends to amplify itself; beneficial consequences of joy in living strengthening the basis for later enjoyment of life.

Chapter 9

CONCLUSIONS

The aim of this study was to identify the conditions that favor a positive appreciation of life. To that end I took stock of the results of empirical investigations on happiness. After a laborious search and a sharp selection I was able to lay hands on 150 publications up to 1975, reporting altogether 156 usable research projects covering 245 populations. Close reading of the reports brought some four thousand findings to light; for the major part correlational ones. In the foregoing three chapters I presented these findings. The question is now whether that left us any the wiser.

At first sight the answer is: not much. Though the data are abundant, their quality is rather poor. Much of it is based on happiness indicators that are not ideal. More often than not there was doubt about the reality value of the correlations and it was characteristically unclear to what extent correlates represent causes.

Yet we are not entirely empty handed. Section 9/1 will show that there is at least reasonable certainty about the effects of some nineteen factors. These findings are largely new and several of them are relevant to policy decisions. Furthermore, it will be demonstrated that the inventory provides a good starting point to sketch out the field. As such it will appear a help in viewing the variety and interactions of factors affecting happiness and it will prove useful in selecting goals for further research. Even more important is that the

data allow a thorough review of current beliefs about happiness. In section 9/2 I will expose several myths, some of which are deeply entrenched in public opinion and scientific thought. A better understanding of happiness begins with the correction of misconceptions.

9/1 CONDITIONS OF HAPPINESS

The foregoing chapters confronted the reader with a host of findings and discussions. Such a torrent of information is not easy to mould into an overall picture. I therefore made a four-page synopsis. See exhibit 9/1.1 This synopsis is inevitably a rather global one. The matter is in fact too complex to be caught fully in a few catchwords and symbols. The reader is warned to use it as a guide to the text, rather than as its substitute.

With the help of this summary I will first take stock of the factors that appeared to effect the appreciation of life (Section 9/1.1). Next I will consider whether any of these represent universal conditions of happiness. (Section 9/1.2). Then I will try to organize the data in a meaningful way. I will do so by proposing a model which allows a tentative positioning of the variables at hand and a view of their interactions (Section 9/1.3). The discussion will end with an enumeration of some promising directions for further research (Section 9/1.4).

9/1.1 WHICH CORRELATES REPRESENT CAUSES?

Exhibit 9/1.1 lists 48 variables, 42 of which were found to be statistically linked with happiness in some condition. These correlational findings help a great deal in identifying the factors that favor a positive appreciation of life. Yet they are not sufficient for that purpose. Correlates do not necessarily represent causes. Hence one cannot escape estimating the degree to which they actually do. Such estimates are hard to make; especially when having to use zero order correlations based on synchronic data. However, I tried to make the best of it. In most cases I did so by considering the possibility that the correlations are due to other effects: to statistical distortion or to effects *of* happiness. In a few cases I found indications about causality in the stray longitudinal data. My tentative conclusions on the matter are summarized in the exhibit as well.

Exhibit 9/1.1: Summary of findings of 245 happiness investigations up to 1975

PRESENT LIVING CONDITIONS

SOCIAL SYSTEM

ECONOMIC

AFFLUENCE 6.1.1

income per head ++ ? → U
+h → D

GROWTH 6.1.1b

in past decade +0 → W

POLITICAL

FREEDOM 6.1.2

censorship by state -- → W
freedom of press ++ → LC
++ → LC

DEMOCRACY 6.1.2b

liberal democracy ++ → W
interest democracy ++ → LC
++ → LC

URBAN

RURAL 6.1.4a

rural vs urban -- ? → U
0 → D

SIZE OF TOWN 6.1.4b

small vs big + ? → U
0 → LC
- ? → US

SOCIAL POSITION

ASCRIPTIVE

GENDER 6.2.1

male vs female 0 → W

AGE 6.2.2

old vs young 0 → W
hedonic level drops but
contentment rises

ACHIEVED

INCOME 6.2.4

family income ++ ? → U
++/s → D

EDUCATION 6.2.5

school education ++ → U
+h → D

WORK

HAVING WORK 6.3.1

chief wage earner ++/0=1 ? → D
elderly +/0=1 ? → D
married to cozier partners +/0=1 ? → D
0 ? → US

OCCUPATION 6.3.2

professional ++ ? → W
clerical + → W
skilled manual 0 → W
unskilled manual - ? → W
peasant -- ? → W

INTIMATE TIES

SPOUSE 6.4.1

having partner ++/s → D
quality bond ++ → D
happiness spouse ++ ? → US

CHILDREN 6.4.2

having children -/+ ? → W
- → D
quality contacts ++ ? → D

Thickly printed factors: causal effect demonstrated
Not-thickly printed factors: causal effect not (yet) demonstrated

STRENGTH OF CORRELATIONS

++ strong positive
 + modest positive
 0 no correlation
 - modest negative
 -- strong negative

CHANGE IN CORRELATION:

↑ increased
 | constant
 ↓ decreased

PAST LIVING CONDITIONS

SECURITY 6/1.1c

inflation	0	?	←	→	W
unemployment	0	?	←	→	IC
public health	++	?	←	→	W
public welfare	-	?	←	→	IC

UNREST 6/1.2c

past unrest	--	?	←	→	W
current unrest	--	?	←	→	W
	--	?	←	→	D

LOCAL PROSPERITY 6/1.4c

econ. prosperity	+	X	←	→	US
------------------	---	---	---	---	----

MINORITY STATUS 6/2.3

days 1960's	- 0	?	←	→	US
immigrants 1960's	-	?	←	→	US
blacks 1946-1966	0 -	?	←	→	US
papers 1960's	-	?	←	→	Nigeria

JOBPRIORITIES 6/2.6

public perceived	+	?	←	→	D
self perceived	+	?	←	→	D
perceived rise	+0	?	←	→	D

EQUALITY 6/1.1d

income equality	++	?	←	→	W
	+	?	←	→	IC

WAR 6/1.3

threat of war	-	?	←	→	Indi/62
	0	?	←	→	US/3

WAR 6/1.3, 8/1.2c

involved in WWII	-	?	←	→	D
defeated in WWII	--	?	←	→	D
imprisoned in concentration camp	-	?	←	→	D

IMMIGRATION 8/1.2b

foreign born	-	?	←	→	
--------------	---	---	---	---	--

LOOKS 8/2c

prettier than other highschool girls	X	?	←	→	US
--------------------------------------	---	---	---	---	----

GLOBAL RANK 6/2.7

current rank	++	?	←	→	U
father's rank	++/?	?	←	→	D
rank mobility	0	?	←	→	US
rank consistency	0	?	←	→	D

POVERTY 8/1.1c

recalled poverty at home	+	?	←	→	US
--------------------------	---	---	---	---	----

VOLUNTARY WORK 6/3.3

membership	+	?	←	→	US
activity	+	?	←	→	D

FRIENDS/RELATIVES 6/4.3

number	+	?	←	→	W
frequency	+	?	←	→	D
confidence	++	?	←	→	US

PARENTAL TREATMENT 8/1.1c

recalled support	++	?	←	→	US
actual support	++	?	←	→	US

FAMILY 8/1.1b

death of parent	-				US
divorce of parents	-				US
recalled conflicts between parents	-0				US
recalled conflicts with siblings	-				US*

CHANCE THAT CORRELATIONS ARE DUE TO:

statistical distortions	effect on happiness	effect on happiness	
X	←	←	impossible
?	←	←	hardly possible
?	←	→	possible but unproven
?	←	→	possible and proven to be involved
?	←	←	possible but some evidence against
?	←	←	possible but strong evidence against

POPULATION:

D	two or more developed nations
U	two or more undeveloped nations
W	two or more developed and undeveloped nations
?	no general population samples but specific categories, mostly students

Exhibit 9/1.1 continued

PRESENT INDIVIDUAL CHARACTERISTICS

<i>RESOURCES</i>	HEALTH 7/1.1				MENTAL EFFECTIVENESS 7/1.2									
	typhoid fever	0/0	↑		←	→	D		impairment	--	↑	←	→	D
	self-rated	++	↑		←	→	W		positive signs	++	↑	←	→	D
	complaints	-	↑		←	→	D		mental maturity	++	↑	←	→	US
	handicaps	-/0	↑	←	→	D								
	loneliness	+	↑	←	→	US								
<i>PERSONALITY</i>	WELL-BEING EXPERIENCE 7/1.3				DEFENSES 7/2.2									
	rich affect	0	↑		←	→	D		fearing against	-	↑	←	→	US
	rich cognition	0	↑		←	→	US		projection	-	↑	←	→	US
<i>PERSONALITY</i>	LATE CONTROL 7/2.1				DEFENSES 7/2.2									
	belief in	+	↑		←	→	US		repression	0	↑	←	→	US
<i>LEISURE</i>	LEISURE 7/3a				CONSUMPTION 7/3b									
	activity in	0/0	↑		←	→	D		eating habits	0	↑	←	→	D
<i>CONVICTS</i>	CHANGE OR NOT 7/4a				OBJECTS 7/4d									
	wants change	--	↑		←	→	W		values/character	+	↑	←	→	W
<i>CONVICTS</i>	ETHICAL VALUES 7/5.1				RELIGION 7/3.2									
	emphasis on	0/0	↑		←	→	D		religiousness	0/0	↑	←	→	D
	sharing with int.	0/0	↑		←	→	D		denomination	0/0	↑	←	→	W
	value priorities	-/0/0	↑	←	→	D								
<i>APPRECIATIONS</i>	SATISFACTION WITH ASPECTS OF LIFE 7/5				RELIGION 7/3.2									
	intimate ties	+++	↑		←	→	D		work	++	↑	←	→	D
	income	+++	↑		←	→	D		health	++	↑	←	→	D
	oneself	+++	↑		←	→	D		living environment	+	↑	←	→	D
	leisure	++	↑	←	→	D	country	+	↑	←	→	D		

Thickly printed factors: causal effect demonstrated
 Not-thickly printed factors: causal effect not (yet) demonstrated

STRENGTH OF CORRELATIONS

++ strong positive
 + modest positive
 0 no correlation
 - modest negative
 -- strong negative

CHANGE IN CORRELATION:

↑ increased
 ↓ constant
 ↓ decreased

PAST INDIVIDUAL CHARACTERISTICS

ABILITY 7/1.3

social ability	++	?	←	→	D
intelligence	0/+	?	←	→	D

ACTIVITY 7/1.4

actual activity	++	?	←	→	D
appreciate fun	++	?	←	→	D
burdenment	0	?	←	→	D

APETITE TO LIKE THINGS 7/2.3

pleasant associat.	+	+	←	→	US*
appreciation of odors	0	?	←	→	US*

TIME ORIENTATION 7/2.4

time expansion	+/0	?	←	→	D*
temporal emphasis	-/0	?	←	→	D*
organization	+/0	?	←	→	D*
time pressure	0	?	←	→	D*
speed of passage	+	?	←	→	US*

SLEEPING 7/3c

amount of deep going to bed late	0	?	←	→	US
	+	?	←	→	US

ASCETIC LIVING 7/3d

laborious living	0/+	?	←	→	D
sober living	-	?	←	→	D
renouncing fun	-	?	←	→	US

CONSERVATISM 7/5.3

political	+	?	←	→	W
sexual	0/+	?	←	→	US*
gender role	0	?	←	→	US

VIEWS ON HAPPINESS 7/5.4

perceived sources	+/0-	?	←	→	US
moral acceptance	+	?	←	→	US

LIFE GOALS AT AGE 20 8/2b

work, study	+	?	←	→	US
automatic ties	-/+	?	←	→	US
ideals	0	?	←	→	US
achievement	0	?	←	→	US
pleasure, fun	+	?	←	→	US
wealth	0	?	←	→	US

CHANCE THAT CORRELATIONS ARE DUE TO

statistical distortions	effect of happiness	effect on happiness	
↖	←	←	impossible
↗	→	→	hardly possible
↖	→	→	possible but unproven
↗	←	←	possible and proven to be involved
↖	↖	↖	possible but some evidence against
↗	↗	↗	possible but strong evidence against

POPULATION

D	two or more developed nations
U	two or more undeveloped nations
W	two or more developed and undeveloped nations
-	no general population samples but specific categories, mostly students

EARLIER HAPPINESS 8/2.c

recalled	+	?	←	→	US
retested	++	?	←	→	D

9/1.1.1 *Which correlations are sufficiently reliable?*

Correlations can in fact be statistical artifacts. Several sources of distortion may be involved: ‘parallel response bias’, ‘contamination’ and, particularly, ‘spuriousness’. In the foregoing three chapters I inspected all correlations for traces of such distortion. With the help of the literature I constructed hypotheses about possible distortions. The cases where distortions could well be involved are marked with a question-mark in the exhibit (?). Where distortion was deemed impossible, the question-mark is crossed with a thick line to the left (~~?~~). When distortion was not impossible, but not that likely, it was crossed with a thin one (~~?~~). In all cases where distortion was considered possible I assessed the tenability of the charges raised. In some instances I did indeed find evidence for my suspicions. The question-mark was then printed thickly (**?**). More often I found evidence to the contrary. Where at least one of the several charges was rebutted I crossed the question-mark with a thin line to the right (~~?~~); where all evident charges were dismissed, with a thick one (~~?~~).

A glance at the exhibit shows that most correlations are not beyond doubt. The scheme is in fact powdered with question-marks, only a few of which are crossed thickly. The correlations that seem most sound are the ones with ‘gender’ (section 6/2.1), ‘age’ (section 6/2.2), ‘ethnicity’ (section 6/2.3d), ‘income’ (section 6/3.4), ‘marital status’ (section 6/4.1a) and ‘having children’ (section 6/4.2). Yet even in these cases there is no absolute certainty. Alongside the few evident charges that were checked, there are usually other possible sources of distortion.

9/1.1.2 *Which correlations are due to effects of happiness?*

In as far as they are not due to statistical distortion, the correlations can be taken to reflect a causal relationship. Yet they do not necessarily reflect causal effects of the correlated factors on happiness. Causality can usually work in two directions, so that correlations may also reflect influences of happiness on the correlated factor. So the following step was to estimate the degree to which causality worked in either of these directions. Again I considered all appreciable positive or negative correlations; once more largely by constructing hypotheses about the effects responsible and then by checking these as far as I could.

In some instances it was quite clear that effects of happiness could not be involved. The unhappiness of Black people in the US in the 1960’s (section 6/2.3d) was evidently not a case of dissatisfaction darkening one’s skin. These cases are marked with a left pointing arrow crossed with a left leaning line in thick (~~←~~). In some other cases one could imagine influences of happiness, but seemed such theories rather far-fetched.

For example, the correlation between the average happiness of citizens and the economic prosperity of the nations (section 6/1.1a) can hardly be explained as the result of selective migration or as a consequence of the greater productivity of happy people. These few cases are indicated with a left pointed arrow crossed with a thin line to the left (\leftarrow). Mostly effects of happiness did not seem improbable at first sight. I marked these cases with a left pointing arrow (\leftarrow) and then searched for evidence that such effects were actually involved. Where some such evidence was indeed found I printed the arrow thickly (\leftarrow). Where I found evidence to the contrary I crossed it; where only some of the possible effects were eliminated, with a thin line to the right (\rightarrow) and where most were refuted with a thick one (\rightarrow). Once again the latter sign does not guarantee that not any effect of happiness was involved.

As can be seen in the exhibit, most correlations might be due to effects of happiness. In four instances there is evidence that such effects were actually involved, namely the cases of ‘age’ (section 6/2.2), ‘intimate ties’ (section 6/4), ‘health’ (section 7/1.1) and ‘activity’ (section 7/1.4). However, it has not been ascertained to what extent these effects are responsible for the correlations. Demonstration that the effects of happiness were involved does not imply that the correlations do not reflect any effects of the correlated factor *on* it. In the cases of ‘intimate ties’ and ‘health’ there is even evidence that causality worked the other way as well, while in the cases of ‘age’ and ‘activity’ such effects are at least plausible. In several cases I met with arguments for doubting that happiness exerts any appreciable effect: for example in the case of ‘political unrest’ (section 6/1.2c), ‘social rank’ (section 6/2.7) and ‘retirement’ (section 6/3.1b). Mostly there was no evidence at all, either for or against the suggested effects of happiness.

9/1.1.3 Which of the correlations reflect effects on happiness?

Obviously I also checked the possibility that the correlations represent what I actually sought; conditions that favor a positive appreciation of life or are detrimental to it. Contrary to the foregoing case, such effects were never incomprehensible and the hypothesis of their existence not even farfetched. This is hardly surprising because investigators tend to select promising variables. Anyway, it was possible to mark all with an arrow pointing to the right (\rightarrow), and none with (\rightarrow) or with (\rightarrow).

Then I had to assess whether there are indications that such effects were indeed involved. I met with three kinds of clues on the matter.

Firstly, there are indications in the few longitudinal data. In India, in 1962 there was for instance a drop in happiness right after the outbreak of skirmishes at the Chinese border. (Section 6/1.3). There is little doubt that the

threat of war caused this decrease. Longitudinal observations also suggest effects of ‘losing one’s job’, and ‘retirement’. (Some becoming happier, others unhappier as a result; section 6/2.4). Comparison through time demonstrated also influence on happiness of ‘health’ (negative effect: section 7/1.1) and of increased ‘fate control’ (positive effect: section 7/2.1). These cases are marked with a thick arrow pointing right (→).

Secondly, I found unmistakable hints in the results of some statistical elaborations. E.g. the correlation between happiness and ‘education’ disappeared largely when checked for ‘income’ (section 6/2.5), whereas checking the correlation between happiness and ‘income’ for ‘education’ did not change much (section 6/2.4). This means that education probably affected happiness by providing better income chances. (To some extent also that financially well off people enjoyed better educational opportunities). A similar reasoning applies in the case of ‘immigrants’ in the US. The lower happiness of these people appeared also largely a matter of ‘income’ (section 8/1.2b), indicating that immigrant status reduced economic opportunities and thereby the appreciation of life. In the same vein it can be argued that the degree of ‘economic affluence’ of nations affected the happiness of their citizens in some cases. Where poverty involved large scale malnutrition, there is at least little doubt about adverse effects. These cases are also marked with a right pointed arrow in thick (→).

Thirdly, effects of happiness can be demonstrated by eliminating the possibilities that correlations were caused otherwise. The alternative explanations are that the correlations were due to statistical distortion and/or to effects of happiness. All findings have already been considered for these explanations, hence we can now read in the exhibit in what cases neither of them applies. These cases are the ones with both the question mark and the arrow pointing left crossed thickly. There are seven such cases: once more a rather accidental collection. Two of these concern past living conditions: ‘death of one or both parents before age of 15’ (among adult Americans: section 8/1.1b) and ‘earlier imprisonment in a German death camp’ (among Jewish survivors of World War II; section 8/1.2c). There is little doubt that these conditions are responsible for the relatively low happiness of the people concerned. One case concerns an earlier personal characteristic: namely ‘good looks’ at high school age (among middle-aged American females: section 8/2a). The characteristic at hand here is probably responsible for variations in happiness as well. The remaining cases concern present living conditions: ‘threat of war’ in India in 1962 (negative effect on happiness: section 6/1.3), ‘Black-White’ difference in the postwar US (negative effect on the happiness of Blacks, the most successful

in particular: section 6/2.3d) and ‘occupational prestige’ (positive effect of happiness: section 6/2.5). The last in this row is the case of ‘gender’ (section 6/2.1). Here we meet with a non-correlation; no statistical distortion or effect of happiness being involved here, we can be reasonably sure that the chances of pleasure in life are not appreciably different for males and females in contemporary society.

In several instances alternative explanations cannot be ruled out completely, but are not very likely to have played any dominant role. This is the case with most of the social system characteristics (‘affluence’, ‘income inequality’, ‘freedom’, ‘democracy’ and ‘political unrest’) as far as western nations are concerned (section 6/1). Alternative explanations were also considerably curtailed in the cases of individual ‘income’ in western nations in the postwar decades (section 6/2.4) and in the case of the earlier ‘divorce of parents’ among Americans (section 8/1.1b).

Lastly the case of ‘age’: here we can infer that a negative effect on happiness is involved. The non-difference between old and young being reliable and a positive effect of happiness on longevity having been demonstrated, we cannot fail to conclude that aging influences (overall) happiness slightly negatively (section 6/2.2).

The variables that passed this test are printed thick in exhibit 9/1.1, nineteen in total. There being forty-eight main variables involved, this is more than one-third. In the other cases it remains unclear whether causal effects on happiness were involved or not. This lack seriously limits the usefulness of the other two-thirds of the findings. Yet it does not render them worthless. At least they mark promising variables and can thus guide further research.

9/1.2 VARIATIONS IN CORRELATIONS.

Several investigators hoped to identify ‘the’ matters that make for happiness. Yet we have seen that the correlations were often not identical in all situations. The following differences stand out:

Differences between societies

Quite notable differences appeared between the poor and the rich parts of the world. ‘Income’ mattered more for happiness in the former than in the latter; ‘national income’ (Section 6/1.1a) as well as ‘personal income’ (section 6/2.4). Independent there of ‘education’

also seemed more significant in the poor countries (section 6/2.5). Part of these differences was reflected in the finding that rural people in poor countries were typically less happy than their compatriots living in towns, while in the rich countries no such differences appeared (section 6/1.4b,c).

Within the rich world we met with yet another difference. The ‘presence of a life partner’ appeared more crucial in the most modern western nations than in more traditional ones (section 6/4.1c).

Differences through time

The last mentioned cross-national difference has manifested itself cross-temporally as well. During the postwar decades, happiness grew more dependent on the ‘presence of a life partner’; both in the Netherlands and the US (section 6/4.1c).

Another trend to note is that correlations with ‘income’, ‘education’ and ‘occupational rank’ decreased in several western nations. In some instances the correlation dropped from + .30 or more around 1950 to about zero in the 1970’s (section 6/2.7f).

A similar decrease was observed in the correlation between happiness and ‘religiousness’.

A once strong link largely disappeared, both in the Netherlands and the US (section 7/5.2). The most striking time difference is undoubtedly that Blacks were almost as happy as Whites in the US in 1946, while in 1966 they were found to be less happy, particularly the most emancipated Blacks (section 6/2.3).

Differences between social categories

The case of Black-White differences in post-war US also illustrates that things can pan out differently in one social category than in another. Happiness dropped most dramatically among well-educated Blacks with well paying jobs, especially among those living in cities in the liberal North. Young Blacks were also more afflicted than elderly ones.

Further differences between age categories appeared in the correlations with ‘employment status’ (section 6/3.1), ‘friendship’ (section 6/4.3) and ‘religiousness’ (section 7/5.2). In the last case there was also a noticeable difference between males and females.

Variations with personal preferences

Though the matter has not yet been investigated systematically, it is clear that the impact of conditions depends largely on what people want. ‘Unemployment’ appeared for instance more detrimental to the happiness of people who enjoyed working than of those who missed the shop rather than the job (section 6/3.1).

Universal conditions?

All this variation does not imply that there are not any general requirements for a positive appreciation of life. Obviously human functioning sets some minimal bio-psychic demands. Several students of motivation tried to identify these 'basic human needs'. See e.g. McDougall (1908), Maslow (1954) and Wentholt (1975). Though one may object to particular theories specifying *which* needs are universal, there is no doubt *that* all humans share some basic needs, which make themselves felt in all situations and cannot be completely overruled by acquired preferences and convictions. As happiness is likely to depend to some degree on the gratification of such universal needs it is also likely that there are universal conditions of happiness.

The empirical demonstration of those universals is difficult, however. So far we have found evidence for only one; the rather obvious requirement that people be 'sufficiently fed'. There is also considerable evidence that people cannot enjoy life in a 'hostile social environment': particularly when no 'safe intimate networks' exist. Yet this has not been convincingly demonstrated. Neither is there any cross-cultural evidence for the equally obvious assertion that happiness is favored by 'good health'.

Though questions about universal requirements for happiness have figured at all times in the history of western thought, definite answers are still absent.

9/1.3 THE CORRELATES IN CONTEXT

So much for the enumeration of issues that appeared to influence happiness in various conditions. It is a bare catalogue. Exhibit 9/1.1 lists detached factors as if there were no interrelations, and it presents all variables in the same way whereas they are obviously not all of the same order. The question is how one should organize the data in a more meaningful way. The discussions in the preceding chapters allowed a glance at the interrelations between the variables at hand. While exploring the possible causal effects involved, we met with several variables that had also appeared to be related to happiness. The negative effects of 'war' for instance were attributed to consequences of five variables in the present collection: to the reduction of 'economic affluence', the curtailing of 'freedom and democracy', to the disorganization of 'intimate networks', to damage to 'health and mental effectiveness' and to shaking of 'control beliefs' (section 6/1.3). In some instances it was possible to substantiate such hypotheses empirically. There was for

instance evidence that the lower appreciation of life in the poor countries was at least partly a result of the greater prevalence of 'health problems' there (section 6/1.1a). It was also demonstrated that the greater happiness of US-born and well- educated Americans is largely a matter of their better 'income' chances (section 6/2.1b, respectively 6/2.5). Some variables were attributed with an intermediate role more often than others. The most frequently mentioned were 'physical health', 'mental effectiveness' and 'self- esteem'. 'Intimate ties' popped up in several explorations as well.

So there is certainly some coherence in the seemingly loose collection of correlates at hand. Yet it is difficult to map the network of interrelations more completely. Working with a single data set one could to some extent demonstrate the various interrelations empirically. Advanced statistical techniques, such as LISREL, allow the charting of quite complex causal patterns. See among others Ormel (1980, ch. 8) for an attempt to order a dozen correlates in this way. Whatever the merits of this approach, it is of little help here. The collection draws on 245 different data sets. Interrelations between variables cannot therefore be computed in most cases.

If better empirical ordering is beyond our reach, would it not perhaps be possible to bring more organization into the data by placing them in some theoretical framework? Though there is not yet any comprehensive theory of happiness, there are at least various ideas about the processes or interaction-patterns involved. Some attempts have been made to integrate such notions in so-called 'models' of happiness. Referring to various theories of happiness Shin & Johnson (1978:490) grouped various correlates in three categories: 'resources' (in my terms 'social-positional' variables), 'assessment of needs' (in my terms 'life-aspect appreciations') and 'comparisons of life' (in my language 'past' and 'expected' happiness). They demonstrated that each of these categories of variables had some independent relation to happiness. Similar models were proposed by Pommer & van Praag (1978:11) and by Kennedy (1978:446). Though better than nothing, these models are still very simple. Organizing the rich data on that basis would involve a great loss of information.

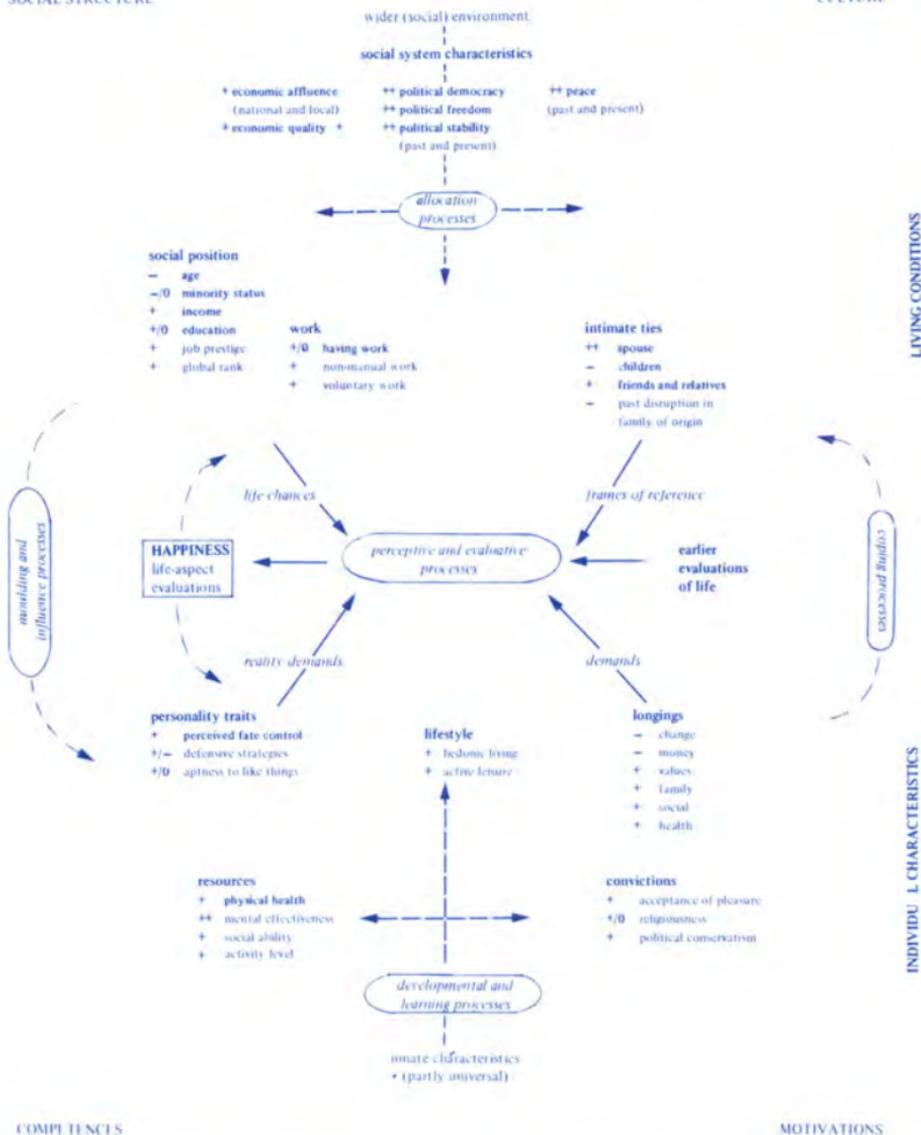
9/1.3.1 A model of happiness

A more elaborate arrangement is proposed in exhibit 9/1.3. It provides a global reflection of several theoretical relationships featuring in the foregoing discussions. The model depicts happiness as the result of various interactions between characteristics of the individual and his environment. It outlines the main variables that appeared to influence happiness (printed in non-italics)

A tentative ordering of demonstrated correlates of happiness in contemporary western society.

SOCIAL STRUCTURE

CULTURE



COMPETENCES

MOTIVATIONS

IN CAPITAL LETTERS:

In big thick letters:

In small thick letters:

In small thin letters:

In italics:

global classes of determinants
 global categories of demonstrated correlates of happiness:
 (drawn from exhibit 9/1.1)

specific variables shown to affect happiness in contemporary western society

specific variables shown to be correlated to happiness in contemporary western society

intermediating links

→ "direct" effects

- - - → "indirect" effects

and it suggests some intermediating links (printed in italics).

9/1.3.2 Global classes of determinants

The model is based on the well-known distinction between ‘living conditions’ and ‘individual characteristics’: in other words between ‘outer’ and ‘inner’ determinants of happiness. On that basis it further distinguishes between four main fields of conditions of happiness: at the environmental level between *socio-structural* variables and *cultural* ones and at the individual level between *competences* and *motivations*. These terms appear in capital letters at the corners of the exhibit; at the top and at the bottom respectively.

The findings are positioned in this context; the same findings as summarized in exhibit 9/1.1. As it is impossible to print all in full detail, it suffices to indicate the main ones in headword. The words in big letters refer to the global categories of determinants involved and the words in small letters to the factors actually found to be related to happiness. Where there was evidence for causal effects, the latter ones are printed thick.

The distinction between two classes of environmental conditions and two classes of inner ones is a good help to indicate some of the differences between the variables at hand. Yet there is little sense in trying to squeeze all into a strict four-fold pattern. Not all living conditions can be classified as either ‘socio-structural’ or ‘cultural’ (for example not ‘ethnicity’ and ‘gender’), nor do all individual characteristics either belong to the realm of ‘competences’ or ‘motivations’ (e.g. not ‘activity level’). The distinction between ‘living conditions’ and ‘individual characteristics’ (the upper and the lower half of the exhibit) is sometimes even problematic. The effects of ‘age’ draw for instance both on the bio-psychical consequences of aging and on social reactions. Another thing to note is that not all fields are equally well fitted. The square of cultural variables is left blank on the exhibit. As noted earlier, there are several promising variables in this field (e.g. ‘ideological anchors for meaning’, ‘conceptions of the good life’, ‘ideas about equity’), but their relationship with happiness has not yet been empirically explored.

9/1.3.3 Links to happiness

As happiness is an ‘evaluation’, effects on it are largely mediated by perceptive and evaluative processes of the mind. For the time being it is largely unclear how the factors that influence happiness enter into these processes. Several suggestions have been raised; some of which were noted in passing in the foregoing sections. These presumed intermediating variables

and processes are indicated in italics in the exhibit.

Life chances

Starting from the center of the exhibit we meet first of all with the term 'life-chances'. It symbolizes the effects living conditions (in particular socio-structural conditions) have on the realities the individual considers in evaluating his life. These chances not only concern matters of 'money' and 'prestige', but also the 'predictability of one's environment', links with 'meaningful tasks' and 'variation' in one's life.

Frames of reference

Next to their effects on the quality of life as such, living conditions may also influence the appreciation of it. They do so partly by their consequences for collectively held 'frames of reference', which guide both the individual's perception of reality and the standards by which he judges his life. Frames of reference figure not only in explicit ideologies. They are also embodied in fictional themes, in common sense and even in language. Frames of reference sometimes differ across the social categories that mark variation in life-chances.

Demands

Facing 'frames of reference' we meet with the term 'demands'. It depicts a common element in most of the individual characteristics figuring in the lower half of the exhibit; all the things a person consciously or unconsciously wants and which for that reason play a role in his evaluation of life. Individual demands are obviously linked with socio-cultural frames of reference. Yet they are not the same. Demands are to some extent dictated by universal bio-psychic requirements for functioning and to that extent are largely independent of culturally variable standards. They are moreover in some degree ideosyncratic; though the motivational variation which our existential condition leaves us is largely filled with socially defined demand we also develop preferences by ourselves; sometimes even quite bizarre ones. The greater part of what is called 'demands' here is implied in more specific 'longings' and 'convictions'. Yet the other personal characteristics may involve 'demands' as well and to some extent different ones. 'Lifestyles' and 'resources' may (each on its own or in interaction) result in tasks or strivings which do not crystallize into conscious preferences but which nevertheless play a role in evaluations of life.

Reality command

Finally we meet with the term 'reality command'. This is the degree to which the individual is able to take advantage of the life-chances allowed by the environment and hence to turn things to his demands.

In mutual interaction 'life-chances' and 'reality command' shape the realities of life that are subject to evaluation. It is clear that several of the personal characteristics that influence happiness do so because they involve a better reality command. That is particularly clear for the factors labeled as 'resources' and also for some of the 'personality traits' ('perceived fate control' and 'defensiveness'). In some instances 'lifestyles' and 'convictions' may have consequences for reality command as well.

Past evaluations

All four of these intermediating effects on happiness are indicated with arrows (not dotted). A fifth arrow, right in the middle of the exhibit, depicts an intermediating variable of another kind. It acknowledges that evaluations of life tend to draw on earlier ones and that happiness is in that respect self-perpetuating to some extent; at least as far as no great changes occur. This effect was discussed in section 8/2c.

9/1.3.4 Indirect effects

The above discussion focused on more or less direct effects of the factors under review on the appreciation of life. Yet this is not the whole story. Various indirect effects are involved as well. In the exhibit these are indicated with dotted arrows.

Effects of outer conditions on inner determinants of happiness

In the first place the various outer living conditions not only affect happiness by their consequences for 'life chances' and 'frames of reference', but also by their impact on the development of inner characteristics that matter. The various 'traits' and 'resources' as well as the 'lifestyles', 'convictions' and 'longings' are largely the result of developmental and learning processes which took place in a socio-cultural scene, determined by such matters as 'rank', 'intimates' and 'religion'. Both short-term influences and long-term molding processes are involved.

An example may clarify the difference between 'direct' and 'indirect' effects of outer conditions on happiness: remember the illustrative case of the US Blacks described in section 6/2.3c. In spite of improving life-chances (decreasing discrimination) they became less satisfied with life between 1946 and 1966. This seemed partly to be a result of unexpected 'direct' effects; in particular of effects on frames of reference. Successful Blacks became more inclined to see themselves and their situation through White eyes, because they came in closer contact with White middle class culture, while at the same time accompanying ideological changes undermined the

belief systems that had once reconciled Uncle Tom with his lot. To some extent the drop in happiness also seemed due to the 'indirect' effects of emancipation and acculturation: to the effects of this social change at the level of personal characteristics; on 'self esteem' in particular. Though discrimination lessened actually, increased contacts made it felt more painfully, while the loosening of ties to authentic Black subculture made emancipating Blacks more vulnerable for assaults on their self-respect. Acculturation may also have involved the adoption of less satisfying 'lifestyles'.

Effects of inner characteristics on outer determinants of happiness

Similarly, the model depicts two main ways in which personal characteristics influence happiness. They not only set the scene with 'demands' and 'reality command', but — as the result of long term coping processes — they also affect various 'living conditions'. Individual 'abilities' in particular determine to some extent what 'social position' one achieves and the quality of one's 'intimate network'.

Let me illustrate the matters by referring to the earlier discussion on effects of 'mental effectiveness' in section 7/1.2. Several rather 'direct' effects were mentioned in that context. It was for example noted that mentally effective people tend to set more realistic demands and that their interpretation of reality is characteristically less distorted by defensive tendencies. As for the 'indirect' effects it was suggested that mentally effective people achieve better living conditions for themselves in the long run. Though individual effort cannot change things like 'social injustice', 'age' or minority status', it does affect 'educational and economical achievement', 'involvement in work tasks' and the 'quality of one's intimate network'.

Interactions between environmental variables

One further thing to note is that there are obvious interrelations within the various living conditions. It is for instance clear that the 'economic affluence' of the country is not without consequences for the size of 'income differences', which in their turn affect chances for 'education' and 'marriage' for example. These interactions are referred to as '*allocation processes*'.

Interactions between inner characteristics

As in the case of living conditions there are evident interactions between several of the personal characteristics as well. Not only do they result from the same developmental and learning processes in earlier phases of life, but to some extent they continue to influence each other. Changes in 'physical health' for instance often have consequences

for one's 'lifestyle' and 'longings' whereas these, in their turn, focus 'perceptions' and mould 'abilities'.

Circular effects

Apart from the various effects *on* happiness, the model also acknowledges the potential effects *of* happiness. Remember that a positive evaluation of life was shown to involve favorable effects on some living conditions (e.g. greater 'acceptance by intimates') as well as on some individual characteristics (among other things: 'health' and 'activity level'). This means that various feedback loops play a role. These effects are symbolized by two dotted arrows in the exhibit: one pointing from happiness to the upper half and the other from happiness to the variables figuring in the lower half.

9/1.3.5 Limitations

Though useful as a guide to one's analytical thinking, models like these can never depict the complexities of reality in sufficient detail. Not only are variables and interrelations too varied to be mapped out two-dimensionally, but also the patterns are probably not identical in all populations. Hence there is little hope that social-psychologists will ever develop models of happiness comparable to the (far from perfect) models by means of which economists calculate the effects of policy alternatives on economic growth.

Though not ideal, this model is nevertheless useful at the present stage of knowledge. It provides a broader scope and more detail than any other comprehensive model proposed so far. If not beyond question, it at any rate induces more systematic reflection on the nature of the variables concerned and in particular on their interactions.

9/1.4 SOME LINES FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

All this shows that the abundant data allow merely a very tentative and very incomplete chart of the conditions of happiness in contemporary society. At the same time it is also clear that there is no need to give up trying to chart it better. Modest advancement has been achieved. Some contours emerged on the map and the requirements for its further completion are now more clear-cut than before. The shortcomings that appeared so poignantly, themselves dictate a program for further research. The following promising lines can be noted.

Control for spuriousness

Many of the question marks in exhibit 9/1.1 can be eliminated through simple checks. For the greater part these can be performed on the basis of existing data sets. Glenn & Weaver's (1979) elaboration of the relation between happiness and 'having children' may serve as an example in this context.

Assessment of causality

It is more difficult to assess to what extent correlated variables do actually influence happiness. Longitudinal investigations are required for that purpose and such investigations are not easy. Yet one broad longitudinal study could teach us more than a dozen synchronic surveys. It would seem to be profitable to follow a panel from youth to adulthood, the impact of differences in living conditions probably being most pronounced in the first phases of life.

Explanation of effects

Even more difficult than demonstrating influence is the indication of dynamics. Mostly I could do little better than make educated guesses. The understanding of happiness would be advanced a great deal by checking these empirically. This would require broad data sets and multi-variety analyses. As in the above case of checking for spuriousness, it would help a great deal to re-analyze existing files. Such research can profit from the global sketch of interrelations provided in the foregoing section.

Other populations

The greater part of the investigations having been performed in western nations, there is as yet little to say about the extent of cultural relativity of the findings. The few cross-cultural investigations were quite enlightening. Further studies of this kind will be fruitful as well, not only surveys in non-western nations, but particularly studies in isolated communities where present-day western standards of the good life have not yet caught on. At the same time one must not forget that present day knowledge of western society is still quite limited. Many variables have been studied only in specific populations. Most data about personality variables come for instance from investigations among American students.

Further variables

Exhibit 9/1.1 probably just represents a random dip into the wealth of issues effecting happiness in contemporary society. In the preceding chapters I mentioned several more promising ones incidentally.

At the social system level for instance I referred to various *cultural characteristics* of society: the 'meaning' they provide, the 'individuality' they allow and the degree to which they 'accept pleasure'. As for one's place in society,

cultural matters deserve more attention as well. The dominant 'outlook on life' in one's social milieu, the 'modes of expression' it provides, the degree of 'conformity' it requires, etc. I would not be surprised if happiness was more closely linked to subtle matters as these rather than to 'hard' variables like 'gender', 'age' and 'income'.

The *individual characteristics* have evidently not been exhaustively explored either. For example it is not defined whether the currently praised traits of 'assertiveness' and 'individualism' actually add to the appreciation of life in modern society, whether the accessibility to so-called 'top experiences' actually plays the role Maslow (1968:209) suggests and whether the often mentioned ability to 'delay gratifications' is really that important. A more basic question that is left unanswered is to what extent organically based dispositions are responsible for differences in hedonic level, for example the degree to which depressed affect can be due to endocrine disturbances: either inherited or resulting from illness.

Unexplored variables are even more numerous where *antecedents* of happiness are concerned. Apart from a few observations among babies we know nothing of the effect on happiness of differences in 'style of upbringing'. Neither are there any systematic observations on the long term consequences for happiness of 'serious illness in youth', of 'rejection by peers' and of 'failure in school', not to mention more subtle matters, such as a 'narrow petty bourgeois climate' in the milieu of origin or 'religious fundamentalism'.

Apart from these white spots on the map, there are also various grey ones. Many variables in exhibit 9/1.1 are still awaiting more detailed examination, among other things 'work' and, in the realm of personal characteristics, 'defensive strategies' and 'aptness to like things'.

9/2 MYTHS ABOUT HAPPINESS

Though the data do not provide a full picture of current determinants of happiness, they do at least allow the correction of various misunderstandings on the matter. Four main categories of misconception are concerned. Firstly, there are several misconceptions surrounding the myth that modern society is typically a sink of unhappiness; these will be discussed in section 9/2.1. Secondly, there are various inaccurate notions about the things that still provide the best chance of enjoying life in the present day western world; they will pass the scene in section 9/2.2. Thirdly, there is the erroneous notion that living conditions do not matter; it will be discussed in section 9/2.3. Finally we will meet with the myth that happiness is of no significance (Section 9/2.4). It is curious that so inaccurate ideas could persist so long on so intensely studied an issue.

9/2.1 THE MYTH THAT MODERN WESTERN SOCIETY IS A SINK OF UNHAPPINESS

Several social critics stressed the perils of modern western society: the alienation involved in its automated mass-production, the loneliness in its expanded towns, the irrationalities of its bureaucratic institutions, etc. Some doubted whether humans are biologically capable of bearing such stresses. Being designed for a rather relaxed life as food-gatherers in small bands, people, they claim, go to pieces when pressed into the hurried routine of specialists in anonymous mass organizations. High rates of 'insanity', 'suicide' and 'drug-addiction' are referred to in support of this view. Not all authors in this tradition give explicit opinions on happiness. One who does is Kerr (1962) in his book on 'The Decline of Pleasure'. Another one is Ostow (1970:1), who opens his 'Psychology of Melancholy' with the contention that present-day Americans are typically unhappy.

These notions are linked with long lived romantic ideas that life is better in 'primitive societies'. The rosy descriptions of some anthropologists encouraged that view. They also tied up well with tendencies to glamorize the 'good old days', which takes its inspiration from roseate historiographics of traditional western society. Though not unquestioned scientifically, these romantic notions enjoy considerable public support. When asked whether

people were happier during the horse-and-buggy days, two thirds of the Americans answered in the affirmative. (AIPO-poll in 1939, cited in Nettler, 1976:20). The ambivalence towards modern society seems at least partly responsible for the rather pessimistic view of the future of the western public opinion in the late 1960's (Ornauer & Galtung, 1976:75).

Unhappiness does not prevail in modern western society

Though it is evident that modern western society labors under serious problems, there is no reason for believing that it marks a historical nadir of unhappiness. Inhabitants of modern western nations appeared quite satisfied with life for the greater part. Typically more than half of them identify themselves as 'very happy', while generally less than 10 percent claims to be 'unhappy'. Remember section 6/1. As we have seen, there is little reason for doubting their words. Most objections to the validity of self-reports on happiness were not confirmed empirically, including the objection that these reports are grossly inflated by 'defensive denial' and 'social desirability bias'. See the sections 3/1d and 3/1f respectively.

No less happy in developed nations

In spite of the evident perils of industrialization and economic growth, people in developed nations are generally happier than people in underdeveloped countries. Remember exhibit 6/1a. This lead is at least partly due to the affluence provided by mass production, so disapproved of by critics of modern society. (Demonstrated in section 6/1.1a).

No less happy in big towns

Contrary to the 'urban malaise theory', people in the country are no more satisfied with life than people in towns. (Shown in section 6/1.4b). Neither are the inhabitants of small towns happier than people living in big cities. In developing nations the reverse is rather the case. Life in the abhorred boom-towns is clearly more satisfying than in the rural villages. (Section 6/1.4c).

No unhappiness because of hurry

Linder (1970:25/26) warned that too hurried a pace of life threatens the happiness of people in modern western countries. Yet the ones who feel most harassed do not take less pleasure in life. See section 7/2.4d.

9/2.2 MYTHS ABOUT THINGS THAT MAKE FOR HAPPINESS IN WESTERN SOCIETIES.

There is a rich folklore about the things that make for happiness. The available data enabled me to check part of it. Most beliefs turned out to be invalid. This suggests that current beliefs on happiness are based on presupposition rather than on accumulated experience.

Women no less happy than men

Contrary to current beliefs, women do not take less pleasure in life than men in contemporary western society. Neither are full-time housewives less happy than working women. See sections 6/2.1 and 6/3.1c respectively.

Income not that important anymore

A relatively high income is generally seen as an important factor in happiness. Yet happiness is not very dependent on relative income level in western nations and there are indications that its effect decreased. See section 6/2.4.

Education matters little, intelligence seems to make no difference

Educationalists claim that school education paves the way to a more satisfying life. In western nations its net effect appeared mostly small, however, and on the decline. Insofar as education contributed to happiness, it did so largely by opening doors to better paying jobs. Claimed benefits in the realm of personality formation have not yet been demonstrated. See section 6/2.5. Test-intelligence appeared essentially unrelated to happiness. (Section 7/1.3b).

Social rank not decisive

Happiness is currently associated with social success. In line with this view, people at the top of the social ladder generally appeared more satisfied with life than people at the bottom. In modern western nations the difference is not very pronounced, however. In the Netherlands it even disappeared altogether in the post-war decades. See respectively section 6/2.7a and 6/2.7d.

Unemployment not detrimental for everybody

Work is considered quite essential to happiness. Not only because of the money it provides, but also because of its immaterial rewards in the realm of 'contact', 'respect' and 'meaning'. Unemployment is therefore expected to be detrimental to happiness. Yet it appeared to be so only among people who were eager to work. Unemployed workers who did not enjoy their former job were not found to be particularly unhappy. Similarly, retirement was shown to set in a drop of happiness only for people who had liked to continue working, but a rise for those who missed the shop rather than the job. Negative effects of retirement moreover appeared to be temporary. In the same vein working outside the home did not turn out to be a guaranteed recipe for happiness as far as married women were concerned.

Single living does not become more satisfying

Modish talk about the decline of the family holds that single living is becoming increasingly rewarding in modern society. (E.g. Adam's (1976) 'Single Blessedness'). The reverse is the case, however. Singles take less pleasure in life than people living with a steady partner and the differences grew larger rather than smaller during the post-war decades. A bond with a spouse is in fact one of the most essential conditions of happiness in modern western society. Friendships do not seem able to compensate its absence completely. See section 6/4.1.

Children do not add to happiness

Children are typically depicted as a source of 'joy', 'meaning' and 'social respect'. Notions about a procreating instinct further suggest childlessness to be frustrating in the long run, particularly for women. However, married people with children did not appear any happier than married people without. Parenthood rather seems to dampen joy in living slightly, probably because the presence of children reduces intimacy between spouses somewhat. See section 6/4.2.

Ascetic living not more rewarding

Contrary to suggestion of ascetic moralists, happy people did not distinguish themselves from the unhappy by a 'hardworking life', 'sober living' and 'aptness to renounce pleasures'. They rather appeared to have an open eye for joy. See section 7/3d.

Only-children not predisposed to unhappiness in adulthood

Many pedagogues bemoan the lot of only-children. They are thought to fall victim to overprotection and indulgence and to miss the link with peers. Whether true or not, this does not materialize into a lower appreciation of life in adulthood See section 8/1.1b.

9/2.3 THE MYTH THAT LIVING CONDITIONS DO NOT MATTER

Several investigations which tried to identify the socio-economic conditions of happiness discovered that happiness does not depend all that much on such matters in western society. These findings raised much misunderstanding, some investigators jumping to the conclusion that all living conditions are irrelevant to happiness everywhere.

9/2.3.1 *Not just a matter of standards*

Most confusion was created by Easterlin (1974) who claimed to have demonstrated that happiness does not depend on the economic level of the nation, but rather on the degree to which one earns more than one's compatriots. On the basis of these observations he argues that happiness is essentially relative: that happiness depends on comparative standards rather than on living conditions as such. This view is largely shared by Brickman & Campbell (1971). These authors enumerate the various standards that may be involved and raise the question of whether the continuous adjustment of standards does not neutralize all advancement towards the good society.

There is no doubt that (social) comparisons do play a role in the evaluation of life. The model in exhibit 9/1.3 showed that living conditions influence happiness largely through 'perceptive and evaluative processes' which are to a considerable extent dependent on given standards of comparison. These standards being subject to social influence, and hence rather variable, the effects of living conditions are variable as well. The effect of living conditions is moreover dependent on rather ideosyncratic standards, such as personal tastes and past experiences.

Yet this is not the whole story. The model also showed that 'reality command' and 'demands' draw to some extent on universal human characteristics. In this respect appraisals are less variable. Our cognition is not built to adapt entirely to trendy frames of reference;

the faculty having been developed to allow us a stable grip on reality. Hence seriously ill people usually go on noticing the discomforts of their illness, even when they have been hospitalized for a long time and compare themselves with fellows in misfortune. Similarly, nature has not fitted us out with indiscriminating motivation. Our psychological demands, and hence our evaluations, are at least partly dictated by basic bio-psychic requirements for functioning, such as 'food', 'protection' and 'social contact'. Social influence may minimize such needs, but cannot erase them.

Consequently, it appeared that several differences in living conditions do matter for happiness. Easterlin was simply incorrect in his contention that people in poor countries are as happy as people in rich ones. 'Poverty' matters, specifically where it involves 'malnutrition'. Such deprivation is not softened by comparison with an equally deprived neighbor. See section 6/1.1a. It also appeared that people do not acquiesce in 'political repression' 'unrest' and 'war'. See respectively the sections 6/1.2a, 6/1.2b and 6/1.3. Nor are we able to do without 'intimate support'; not even where single living is accepted and glamorized. See section 6/4.1.

Differences in living conditions influence happiness at least to the extent to which they matter for the gratification of bio-psychic minimum needs. The challenge is to identify such conditions. Writing off the matter altogether is scientifically shortsighted and politically quite dangerous.

9/2.3.2 Not just a matter of personality and hence insensible to amelioration or deterioration of external conditions

A related misconception is that happiness is exclusively a matter of psychology. This myth originated from the observations that happiness correlates quite strongly with 'soft' variables, but not with 'hard' ones. See for instance Ormel (1980).

It is indeed true that inner characteristics can be quite decisive. See once more the model in exhibit 9/1.3. Competent people tend to take more advantage from life than incompetent ones. (Remember section 7/1.2 on 'mental effectiveness' and section 7/1.3a on 'social ability'.) A tendency to see things from the bright side may help as well, though effects of that kind have not been demonstrated up till now (section 7/2.4).

Yet it is clear that some conditions are simply too hard to bear, whatever the buoyancy and the optimism of the individual. The case of the concentration camps (section 8/1.2c) is an extreme example. The stresses of 'war', 'discrimination', 'widowhood' and 'divorce' seemed to exceed the resilience of most people as well. Remember the sections 6/1.3, 6/2.3d and 6/1.4a respectively.

To some extent living conditions determine

the very characteristics that soften their effects in later phases of life. Remember the ‘molding processes’ indicated in the model. Chapter 8 left no doubt that these influences are strong enough to affect the appreciation of life lastingly.

9/2.4 THE MYTH THAT HAPPINESS IS NOT A SIGNIFICANT MATTER

As noted in the introduction to this book, there is considerable doubt about the significance of happiness. Though the Utilitarian philosophers praised happiness as the highest good, several other theories of value rated it low. This reservation about happiness is partly a matter of taste. Yet it is argued on factual grounds as well. Two main objections are being raised, which are both open to empirical falsification.

9/2.4.1 Experiential happiness not a far cry from real well-being

The first objection holds that experiential happiness is typically a ‘psychological surface phenomenon’ and is, as such, a far cry from ‘real’ inner well-being, and may even be a ‘false’ one. This objection is the crux of several more detailed arguments. One of these is that happiness is too fleeting an experience to be of lasting significance: another that it depends on modish notions about the good life rather than on things that really matter. A variant of this latter argument is the above mentioned theory that happiness draws largely on comparison; comparison with one’s neighbors, comparison with one’s earlier living conditions, comparison with one’s expectations, etc. As such it is claimed to have no link with any real well-being either. The same conclusion is embodied in the argument that evaluations of life tend to stabilize in fixed ideas. Though possibly indicative of true well-being in some early phase of life, happiness judgements are claimed to become increasingly less indicative of the actual welfare of the organism. I tried to check these claims with the help of the available data.

Not a fleeting matter

Happiness as defined here is not a short lived and variable thing.

The appreciation of life stands out as a rather stable attitude. Though it does not always figure in the front ranks of consciousness, people are able to talk about it at any time. Their statements on the matter do not differ from one day to the other. If no major life-changes occur, they remain essentially similar over the years. Remember the sections 3/1c and 8/2c.

Not a mere reflection of modish opinion

It would seem evident that evaluations of life draw heavily on current beliefs about the things that make for happiness. Yet we saw above that things pan out differently in several cases. People in big cities are believed to be relatively unhappy and even think so themselves, but actually they are not. Likewise the fate of full-time housewives is often bemoaned, notwithstanding the fact that they are in fact as happy as their working colleagues. Several more of such examples were mentioned above in section 9/2.2, the most remarkable of which is that single living is believed to have become more gratifying in the Netherlands, while in fact singles became increasingly less happy relatively.

Not wholly relative

Evidently comparison processes play a role in the evaluation of life. Yet happiness is not simply a matter of being better off than one's neighbors. 'Malnutrition', 'repression' and 'war' do hurt, even if the neighbors are more afflicted. People do not get used to these deprivations either, not even when they have never known better. In section 9/2.3 I discussed this matter in more detail. Moreover, we have seen in chapter 7 that happiness draws on stable personal resources, such as 'health', 'mental effectiveness' and 'perceived fate control'. These qualities would add little to happiness if it depended entirely on casual comparison.

Not an 'idée fixe'

Like most established attitudes happiness is not very liable to change. People tend to stick to their view on life, particularly when it is positive. Yet this does not mean that they lose touch with reality completely. It means rather that they adjust their evaluations only when major changes are at hand. The few longitudinal studies leave no doubt that adjustments do occur. Willing workers who were forced to retire went through a temporal drop in happiness (shown in section 6/3.1b) and health problems rendered people less happy as well (section 7/1.1b).

Not merely a matter of surface resignation

People adapt to inevitable sufferings to some extent. This was particularly evident in the case of the Blacks in the US in 1946 and in the case of the aged in western society. See respectively the sections 6/2.3 and 6/2.2. Yet in the latter case the limits of acquiescence were manifested in a decline of hedonic level (section 6/2.2). It is moreover clear that people take no pleasure in life in countries where ‘malnutrition’ is the rule and where ‘political unrest’ prevails (section 6/1).

Not unrelated to ‘real’ well-being

Consequently, experiential happiness appeared not to be unrelated to states figuring in current ‘object’ views of the good life. Happiness was for instance shown to be linked with ‘physical health’, and to be predictive for ‘longevity’. Remember section 7/1.1. Though the correlations were modest, they demonstrate that happiness is more than a mere reflection of surface concerns. It rather sounds out things that matter for life or death. Similarly, happiness appeared strongly related to various indicators of ‘mental effectiveness’ (demonstrated in section 7/1.2). At least part of this correlation must be interpreted as signifying that unhappiness signals serious shortcomings in the individual. Happiness judgements do therefore have something to say about the actual weal and woe of people.

9/2.4.2 *The appreciation of life is not without consequences.*

The second objection holds that happiness is of no consequence. Though most people want to be happy rather than unhappy, unhappiness is claimed not to be really harmful; either for the individual himself, or for the society of which he is a member. Unlike other valued matters such as ‘creativity’ and ‘freedom’, happiness, it is claimed, does not contribute to higher causes: Some people believe rather that *un*happiness stimulates improvement in the long run. There is considerable evidence against these views

Not without consequences for the individual

Happiness not only signals actual well-being, but to some extent adds to it as well. There are indications that a positive appreciation of life fosters ‘physical health’ and postpones ‘death’ (Demonstrated in the sections 7/1.1c and 7/1.1e respectively).

Insofar as hedonic level is concerned, it also stimulates 'activity' and facilitates 'social contact', 'intimate contacts' in particular (See sections 7/1.3 and 6/4.1). In other words dissatisfaction with life tends to produce apathy and isolation and can thereby wreck people.

Not without consequences for society

The above mentioned effects of happiness obviously matter at the social level as well. The more healthy and active the citizens and the smoother their contacts, the greater the chance that society flourishes. Moreover, widespread dissatisfaction with life tends to act as a bomb under the social system. Though unhappiness may block political action to some extent, the presence of many unhappy persons in a society provides a willing public for radical reformers and may thus cause 'upheaval and violence'. It may even give way to spirits of 'war'. In a similar way it can also limit the political room for 'freedom' and 'democracy'. Remember the discussion in the sections 6/1.2 and 6/1.3. Though probably limited, these effects should not be neglected. At the same time they should not be over-estimated either, the (western) societies where happiness is currently most prevalent are obviously not without problems.

These few effects are probably only the top of an iceberg. The consequences of happiness have not been investigated systematically as yet. Still these few findings may sufficiently demonstrate that happiness matters for more than merely its own sake.

APPENDIX

CORRELATES OF HAPPINESS

Number of correlational findings established in 245 empirical investigations on happiness between 1911 and 1975 by subject category.

<i>Code</i> ¹	<i>Label</i> ²	<i>N</i> ³	<i>Code</i>	<i>Label</i>	<i>N</i>
A 1 – ACTIVITY			A 2.2	Types of affect	
A 1.1	General activity	2	2.2.1	– Anger / Agression	7
A 1.2	Work activity: see W 2 and H 4.2		2.2.2	– Anxiety: see A 2.2.20	
A 1.3	Leisure activity: see L 3.3		2.2.3	– Companionship	5
A 1.4	Social activity: see S 4		2.2.4	– Depression	13
A 1.5	Physical activity	11	2.2.5	– Elation	19
A 1.6	Mental activity	5	2.2.6	– Energy	8
A 1.7	Energy level: see A 2.2.6		2.2.7	– Fulness of life	7
A 1.8	Various factors concerning activity	5	2.2.8	– Guilt	6
			2.2.9	– Harmony	5
			2.2.10	– Impulse expression	4
			2.2.11	– Love and sex	5
			2.2.12	– Personal freedom	4
			2.2.13	– Personal moral judgement	5
			2.2.14	– Present work	5
			2.2.15	– Receptivity towards world	5
			2.2.16	– Self-confidence	4
			2.2.17	– Sociability	5
			2.2.18	– Social respect	2
			2.2.19	– Thought processes	5
			2.2.20	– Tranquillity	7
			2.2.21	– Various types of affect	14
A 2 – AFFECT			A 2.3	Various emotional characteristics	3
A 2.1	Quality of affect	10			
2.1.1	– Complexity see H 1.2				
2.1.3	– Intensity	7			
2.1.4	– Variability	25			

1. Classification as used in part three of the Databook (Veenhoven, 1984). Codes are the ones referred to between brackets in the headings in the chapters 6, 7 and 8.
2. Labels devised by the present author.
3. Number of correlational findings.

<i>Code</i>	<i>Label</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>Code</i>	<i>Label</i>	<i>N</i>
A 3	AGE	95	1.1.3.1	Relationship between parents	5
C 1	COGNITION		1.1.3.2	Parental characteristics and behavior	89
C 1.1	Conceptual differentiation and categorization styles	14	1.1.4	Various factors concerning family of origin	8
C 1.2	Field dependence	6	F 1.2	Children	
C 1.3	Intelligence	12	1.2.1	Having children	4
C 1.4	Rigidity	6	1.2.2	Number of children	4
C 1.5	Various cognitive characteristics	16	1.2.3	Number of children at home	5
C 2	CONCERNS, INTERESTS	25	1.2.4	Various factors concerning one's children	10
D 1	DEVIANCE	10	F 1.3	Satisfaction with one's family: see S 1.7.1	
E 1	EDUCATION AND SCHOOL		F 1.4	Various family factors	20
E 1.1	Education		F 2	FREEDOM	
1.1.1	Level of education	60	F 2.1	Freedom in youth	24
1.1.2	Attitudes towards level of education	6	F 2.2	Freedom in adulthood	9
E 1.2	School		G 1	GENDER	
1.2.1	Attitudes towards school	35	G 1.1	Male vs female	88
1.2.2	School ability	9	G 1.2	Gender-role attitudes	11
1.2.3	Stage of study	4	H 1	HAPPINESS	
1.2.4	Extracurricular activities: see L 3.3		H 1.1	Overall happiness or life satisfaction	
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			H 1.5	Future happiness	

<i>Code</i>	<i>Label</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>Code</i>	<i>Label</i>	<i>N</i>
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3.2.2	– Hopes and aspiration concerning one's country	6	L 3 – LIFE STYLE		
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<i>Code</i>	<i>Label</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>Code</i>	<i>Label</i>	<i>N</i>
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3.1.2	– Consumption of alcohol, tobacco and drugs	23	1.4.1	– Married vs divorced: see M 1.1.3	
L 3.2	Sleep rhythm	5	1.4.2	– Never married vs divorced: see M 1.2.3	
L 3.3	Use of leisure time		1.4.3	– Widowed vs divorced: see M 1.3.3	
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1.3.2	– Never married vs widowed: see M 1.2.2				
1.3.3	– Divorced vs widowed	11			
1.3.4	– Separated vs widowed	6			

<i>Code</i>	<i>Label</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>Code</i>	<i>Label</i>	<i>N</i>
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SAMENVATTING

Dit boek gaat over de mate waarin mensen hun eigen leven positief waarderen; kortweg 'levensvoldoening' of 'geluk' genoemd. Het probeert zicht te bieden op de factoren die op die waardering van invloed zijn en op de onderlinge samenhang daarvan. Deze vraagstelling omvat slechts een deel van de problematiek die in filosofische discussies onder de noemer van 'geluk' aan de orde is gesteld. Het gaat hier om wat mensen zelf van hun eigen leven vinden; niet om wat uiteindelijk het beste voor hen is of waartoe ze geroepen zijn.

Al sinds het begin van deze eeuw is er empirisch onderzoek gedaan naar de onderscheidene kenmerken van gelukkige en ongelukkige mensen. Vooral in de zestiger jaren heeft dat onderzoek een hoge vlucht genomen. Bij elkaar zijn er al meer dan duizend studies gepubliceerd, waarvan enkele internationaal vergelijkend. Er zijn enige pogingen ondernomen om de resultaten van dat onderzoek in kaart te brengen; helaas op nogal gebrekkige wijze.

De beschikbare literatuurstudies gaan niet uit van een strakke definitie van geluk, maar vegen eigenlijk alles bij elkaar wat toevallig zo genoemd wordt. Mede daardoor is ook niet kritisch gekeken of geluk in ieder van de besproken onderzoeken wel op verantwoorde wijze gemeten is. De overzichten dekken daardoor in feite nogal uiteenlopende verschijnselen; vergelijking daartussen is niet altijd zinvol. Ook de gevonden statistische verbanden

worden weinig kritisch bekeken. Met geluk gecorreleerde factoren worden vaak zonder meer als 'oorzaak' van geluk aangemerkt. Geen van de onderzoekers gaat systematisch na of de verbanden niet spurieus zijn en of de correlaties niet veroorzaakt worden door invloeden *van* geluk in plaats van door invloeden *op* geluk. Tenslotte blijken de beschikbare overzichten erg onvolledig; meer dan de helft van de publicaties is buiten beschouwing gebleven en uit het beschreven materiaal is uiterst selectief geciteerd.

De bedoeling van dit boek is een beter overzicht te bieden. Daartoe wordt begonnen met een duidelijke afbakening van het terrein.

Begrip geluk

Die afbakening is het onderwerp van hoofdstuk 2. Zoals al opgemerkt gaat het daarbij om de 'waardering van het eigen leven als geheel'. Het leven kan op verschillende aspecten beoordeeld worden, ondermeer op de mate waarin het voldoet aan de eisen die men eraan stelt en de mate waarin men er zich door dag en tijd lekker bij voelt. In het eerste geval wordt gesproken van 'tevreidenheid' en in het tweede geval van 'hedonisch gevoelsniveau'. Waar men bij het oordeel alle relevante aspecten bij elkaar betreft, wordt gesproken van 'overall geluk'. Deze begrippen worden afgezet tegen allerlei vergelijkbare, maar niet identieke begrippen, zoals 'welzijn', 'psychische gezondheid', 'depressiviteit' en 'moreel'. Vervolgens wordt nagegaan in hoeverre valide meting van de aldus afgebakende verschijnselen mogelijk is.

Meting van geluk

Er wordt nogal eens betwijfeld of geluk meetbaar is. Die twijfels betreffen voor een belangrijk deel andere geluksbegrippen dan waar het hier om gaat; deels zijn ze echter ook in dit verband terzake. Het gaat dan voornamelijk om problemen bij het achterhalen van wat mensen nu 'echt' van hun leven vinden. Dat gebeurt meestal door ze ernaar te vragen; bij overall geluk en tevredenheid is vragen zelfs de enige methode. Juist tegen die ondervragingsmethode worden veel bezwaren ingebracht. Er wordt b.v. gesteld dat gelijklopende vragen makkelijk verschillend geïnterpreteerd worden, dat veel mensen geen oordeel hebben en daarom zo maar wat zeggen, dat ze niet makkelijk toegeven ongelukkig te zijn en daardoor vaak mooi weer spelen, etc. In hoofdstuk 3 worden al deze bezwaren op hun houdbaarheid onderzocht. De

meeste bezwaren blijken in de praktijk nauwelijks een rol te spelen en in enkele gevallen is de uitslag nog onbeslist.

Mede in het licht van de genoemde bezwaren wordt vervolgens in hoofdstuk 4 nagegaan welke (ondervragings)technieken acceptabel kunnen worden geacht. Alle gebruikte vragen, testen en methoden worden tegen het licht gehouden. Meer dan de helft wordt afgekeurd; meestal omdat in feite naar iets anders gevraagd wordt dan waar het hier om gaat.

Inventarisatie empirisch geluksonderzoek

Nadat was vastgesteld welke indicatoren van geluk acceptabel geacht kunnen worden, werd een inventarisatie gemaakt van de studies waarin zulke indicatoren gebruikt zijn. Hoofdstuk 5 beschrijft hoe dat in zijn werk ging. Alle vóór 1976 gepubliceerde verslagen van onderzoek op dit terrein werden op dit punt nagelezen. Meer dan duizend rapporten werden bekeken; slechts 150 daarvan bleken acceptabele onderzoeken te beschrijven. Het ging om 156 projecten waarbij 245 verschillende populaties in 32 landen betrokken waren. In de helft van de gevallen gaat het om onderzoek op basis van representatieve steekproeven uit de bevolking van een bepaald land. Daarnaast is er veel onderzoek onder speciale categorieën, zoals bejaarden en studenten. Het merendeel van het onderzoek is in de Verenigde Staten gedaan en ruim een kwart in West Europa.

Bij elkaar levert dit onderzoek een stortvloed van gegevens. Al deze gegevens zijn samengebracht in het 'Databook of Happiness' *, dat de basis vormde van de verdere hoofdstukken van dit boek.

Resultaten

De resultaten van al dit onderzoek zijn samengevat in de hoofdstukken 6, 7 en 8. Hoofdstuk 6 geeft een overzicht van de *levensomstandigheden* die kenmerkend zijn gebleken voor gelukkige mensen. Daarbij komen onder meer enige 'macro-maatschappelijke omstandigheden' (welvaart, politiek regiem, vrede) aan de orde, en vervolgens de 'sociale positie', binnen de samenleving werk en intieme relaties. Hoofdstuk 7 geeft vervolgens een beeld van de *persoonlijke*

* R. Veenhoven: 'Databook of Happiness', Dordrecht, 1984, Reidel Publishing Company

eigenschappen, waarin gelukkige mensen zich blijken te onderscheiden van ongelukkige. Het gaat daarbij om onder meer 'lichamelijke en geestelijke gezondheid', om diverse 'vermogens' en 'persoonlijkheidskenmerken' en om kenmerken op het vlak van 'levensstijl', 'verlangens' en 'overtuigingen'. Tenslotte geeft hoofdstuk 8 een kort overzicht van het weinige onderzoek waarbij verschillen in *voorgeschiedenis* van gelukkige en ongelukkige mensen bekeken zijn.

Het blijft in deze hoofdstukken niet bij een opsomming van onderzoeksresultaten. Waar mogelijk worden de gegevens in een longitudinaal *vergelijkend* perspectief geplaatst. Als eenzelfde variabele op verschillende tijdstippen in een bepaald land op zijn relatie met geluk onderzocht is, wordt bekeken of dat verband veranderd is of niet, en zo ja, waarom. Verschillen in correlatiepatronen tussen landen en tussen categorieën binnen landen worden ook besproken.

Voorts wordt de validiteit in de zin van de *realiteitswaarde* van de verschillende statistische relaties gecheckt. Voorzover mogelijk wordt nagegaan of de verbanden niet spurieus zijn of gevolg van contaminatie. Soms blijken zulk soort vertekeningen inderdaad in het spel te zijn en soms lukt het de bevindingen hiervan vrij te pleiten. In de meeste gevallen blijkt echter geen uitspraak mogelijk.

Tenslotte wordt bij alle statistische verbanden de vraag naar de achterliggende *causale relaties* gesteld: in hoeverre is de correlatie gevolg van effecten van de gecorreleerde factor *op* geluk en in hoeverre van invloeden *van* geluk op de gecorreleerde factor. Ook hier blijkt het vaak niet mogelijk die vraag te beantwoorden. Om uitspraken over causaliteit te doen is vaak experimenteel of longitudinaal onderzoek nodig en dat is op dit terrein niet dik gezaaid.

Overzichtstabel. De uitkomsten van een en ander zijn samengevat in het op de bladzijden 376 t/m 379 afgedrukte overzicht. De factoren waarvan het verband met geluk onderzocht is zijn daar gerubriceerd in 48 categorieën. De nummers die achter de titelkopjes vermeld staan verwijzen naar de betreffende paragrafen in het boek.

Achter ieder van de factoren staat aangegeven wat voor verbanden met geluk gevonden zijn. Dit is gedaan met de tekens '+', 'o' en '-'. In vele gevallen staan er meerdere tekens (b.v. +/o). Dat betekent dan dat er op dit punt verschillende resultaten gevonden zijn, vaak in verschillende populaties.

In enkele gevallen staan er rechts naast de plussen, nullen en minnen

opwaarts of neerwaarts wijzende pijlen. De geven dan aan dat het verband door de tijd is toegenomen of afgenomen. Als bij vergelijking door de tijd bleek dat het verband onveranderd was gebleven, is dit aangegeven met 'I'.

Nog een stapje verder naar rechts verschijnen naast alle onderzochte factoren vraagteken. Een vet gedrukt vraagteken betekent dat er is aangetoond dat het gevonden verband op zijn minst voor een deel misleidend is. Een dun gedrukt vraagteken betekent dat er redenen zijn om aan de realiteitswaarde van het statistisch verband te twijfelen, maar wat dat er wat dit betreft nog geen bewijs is geleverd. Is het vraagteken doorgestreept, dan zijn twijfels onjuist bevonden; bij een dikke streep de meeste twijfels en bij een dunne streep althans één van meerdere.

Naast de vraagtekens zien we horizontale linkswijzende pijltjes. Deze pijltjes symboliseren de mogelijkheid dat het gevonden verband veroorzaakt is door effecten van geluk op de betreffende factor. Is de pijl dik gedrukt, dan is zo'n effect aangetoond; is hij doorgestreept, dan is het aannemelijk dat zo'n effect nauwelijks een rol speelt. Een snelle blik langs de kolommen maakt duidelijk dat daar in de meeste gevallen niets over te zeggen valt: de meeste pijltjes zijn dun gedrukt en niet doorgestreept.

Naast de links wijzende pijltjes zien we vervolgens naar rechts wijzende pijltjes. Deze geven het effect van de betreffende factor op geluk aan, met andere woorden: dat we te doen hebben met een 'determinant' van geluk. Dikgedrukte pijltjes geven ook hier aan dat een oorzakelijk effect is aangetoond. Bij nog geen tien procent van de factoren in dit overzicht is dat het geval. Doorgestreepte pijltjes zijn aanzienlijk dunner gezaaid. Dat is niet zo verwonderlijk, want het onderzoek heeft zich natuurlijk gericht op factoren waarvan invloed op geluk al bij voorbaat in de rede lag.

Helemaal rechts in de kolommen is globaal aangeduid in wat voor populaties de betreffende verbanden gevonden zijn. Vooral de gegevens over de relatie tussen geluk en 'persoonlijke eigenschappen' blijken voor het merendeel ontleend aan onderzoek onder nogal specifieke categoriën in Westerse landen.

Factoren waarvan invloed op geluk is aangetoond. Uit dit overzicht kan nu worden afgelezen welke factoren aantoonbaar van invloed zijn op geluk. Dat zijn de spaarzame gevallen waarin oorzakelijke effecten zijn gebleken (aangegeven met een dikgedrukt rechtswijzend pijltje) en de gevallen waar alternatieve verklaringen worden uitgesloten (waar zowel het vraagteken als het naar linkswijzend pijltje zijn doorgestreept). Die factoren zijn dikgedrukt in het overzicht; bijna één op de drie. Het feit dat deze factoren in de hier beschreven

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populaties van invloed bleken betekent overigens niet dat ze altijd en overal uitmaken voor de waardering van het bestaan. Alleen van factoren als 'welvaart' en 'gezondheid' kan tot op zekere hoogte worden aangenomen dat het determinanten van universele strekking zijn.

Nut overzicht. De waarde van dit overzicht is dat het niet alleen een eerste beeld geeft van de (nog zeer beperkte) empirisch gefundeerde kennis over voorwaarden voor geluk. Het biedt ook een duidelijk richtsnoer voor verder onderzoek; het schema staat vol met gedrukte pijltjes en vraagtekens, waarvan nog niet is vastgesteld of ze in een volgend literatuuroverzicht vet gedrukt moeten worden of doorgehaald. Verder maakt het overzicht in kort bestek duidelijk welke factoren in wat voor populaties al op hun verband met geluk onderzocht zijn en geeft het daarmee impliciet aan hoe onnodige replicaties vermeden kunnen worden en welke terreinen nog moeten worden geëxploreerd, Eén van de terreinen die vooralsnog buiten beeld is gebleven is het culturele.

Bevorderende voorwaarden in onderling verband

De verschillende factoren die van invloed blijken op de waardering van het leven staan uiteraard niet helemaal los van elkaar. Enige samenhangen zijn geschetst in het model op blz. 387. Dat geeft aan dat de besproken factoren het geluk op twee manieren beïnvloeden: 'direct' zowel als 'indirect'. In het model zijn drie invloeden met pijlen aangegeven: de 'directe' invloeden met volle pijlen en de 'indirecte' met gestippelde.

'Directe' invloeden van de factoren die onder de noemer 'levensomstandigheden' werden gevat, zijn enerzijds consequenties voor de persoonlijke levenssituatie van het individu (aangeduid met de term 'levenskansen') en anderzijds effecten op de collectieve 'referentiekaders' waarnaar het individu teruggrijpt bij de beoordeling van zijn bestaan. Daarnaast zijn er tal van meer 'indirecte' invloeden, namelijk invloeden van externe levensomstandigheden op de ontwikkeling van de innerlijke eigenschappen van het individu die uitmaken voor geluk, bijvoorbeeld lange termijn effecten van 'werkomstandigheden' op 'gezondheid' en van 'sociaal milieu' op 'levensstijl'.

Omgekeerd hebben de onderaan in het schema opgevoerde 'persoonlijke eigenschappen' ook hun 'directe' en 'indirecte' effecten op geluk. Vrij 'directe' effecten zijn enerzijds de consequenties van de diverse eigenschappen voor het vermogen tot 'realiteitsbeheersing' van het individu (van invloed op

de kans dat hij zich de gewenste levenssituatie weet te scheppen) en anderzijds hun gevolgen voor de 'eisen' die het individu aan zijn bestaan stelt. 'Indirecte' effecten van persoonlijke eigenschappen zijn in dit verband hun lange -termijn consequenties voor de levensomstandigheden van het individu; bijvoorbeeld de mate waarin 'gebrekkige gezondheid' afbreuk doet aan iemands 'sociale positie' of de mate waarin zijn innemende 'persoonlijkheid' het hem mogelijk maakt een hecht netwerk van 'intieme relaties' op te bouwen.

Het model laat ook iets zien van de circulaire effecten die een rol spelen. De levensomstandigheden die van invloed zijn op geluk worden tot op zekere hoogte ook weer door de mate van geluk bepaald. Plezier in het leven maakt het bijvoorbeeld makkelijker om relaties aan te knopen met vrienden of een levenspartner. Geluk is ook niet zonder consequenties voor de persoonlijke eigenschappen die er op van invloed zijn gebleken. Onvrede met het bestaan blijkt bijvoorbeeld niet bevorderlijk voor de lichamelijke gezondheid! Tenslotte geeft het model ook aan dat de oordelen over het bestaan niet iedere dag opnieuw worden gemaakt, maar sterk afhankelijk zijn van eerdere oordeelsvorming. Als zodanig is geluk tot op zekere hoogte zelfbevestigend.

Misverstanden over geluk

Er zijn tal van opvattingen over geluk in omloop; volkswijsheden zowel als min of meer wetenschappelijke theorieën. Op grond van de resultaten van dit literatuur onderzoek kan daaronder een flinke opruiming worden gehouden.

Het misverstand dat de moderne Westerse samenleving een poel van ongeluk

is. De problemen van de moderne Westerse samenleving worden door tal van maatschappij-critici vaak zeer indringend aan de orde gesteld. In die context is nogal eens beweerd dat het leven vroeger bevredigender was en dat het dat in niet-westerse samenlevingen nog steeds is. Feit is echter dat de gemiddelde tevredenheid met het bestaan momenteel nergens zo groot is als in de Westerse wereld; in het bijzonder in de meest vrije en welvarende delen daarvan. Het leven in de grote stad is ook niet minder bevredigend dan het leven ten plattelande. In ontwikkelingslanden is het omgekeerde eerder het geval. Zelfs in de verfoeide boom-towns blijken de mensen daar toch gelukkiger dan op het - door romantici vaak verheerlijkte - traditionele platteland.

Misverstanden over typische bronnen van geluk in Westerse landen.

Hoewel vaak gesteld wordt dat vrouwen het naar verhouding slecht hebben, blijken

ze toch niet minder plezier in het bestaan te scheppen dan mannen. Full-time huisvrouwen zijn ook niet minder gelukkig dan vrouwen met een baan.

Het idee dat geluk in de huidige Westerse samenleving sterk afhankelijk zou zijn van 'inkomen' 'opleiding' en 'aanzien' wordt maar zeer ten dele bevestigd. De invloed van deze factoren is niet in alle Westerse landen even groot en blijkt de laatste decennia sterk verminderd te zijn. In Nederland maakt sociale 'rang' al niet meer uit voor geluk.

Ook het idee dat 'werkloosheid' afbreuk doet aan de levensvoldoening wordt maar ten dele bevestigd. Dat geldt voornamelijk voor mensen die het geld hard nodig hebben (kostwinners) en voor mensen die werken prettig vinden.

Het modieuze idee dat het 'vrijgezellenbestaan' steeds aantrekkelijker wordt blijkt volstrekt onjuist. Niet alleen zijn alleenstaanden door de bank genomen aanzienlijk minder gelukkig dan mensen met een vaste levenspartner, maar de verschillen worden eerder groter dan kleiner. Ook meer traditionele ideeën over geluksvoorwaarden in het gezinsleven blijken niet houdbaar; noch het idee dat echtelieden meer plezier in het leven krijgen als er kinderen komen, noch het idee dat 'enigst kinderen' uiteindelijk minder gelukkig worden dan mensen die in een groter gezin zijn opgegroeid.

Een laatste misvatting die in dit verband genoemd moet worden is dat geluk vooral een vrucht van een ascetische levenshouding zou zijn. Gelukkige mensen lijken het er eerder goed van te nemen.

Het misverstand dat levensomstandigheden weinig toe of af doen aan geluk.

Er wordt nogal eens beweerd dat geluk vooral een kwestie is van een innerlijke instelling en dat er daardoor ondanks reële verbetering van omstandigheden toch altijd kniesoren zullen blijven. Ook is vaak opgemerkt dat de voldoening die men aan zijn levensomstandigheden ontleent sterk afhankelijk is van de maatstaven die men aanlegt en dat die maatstaven de neiging hebben zich naar het niveau van het haalbare te voegen, zodat verbeteringen uiteindelijk toch niet resulteren in een grotere levensvoldoening. Hoewel daar veel waars in zit is het toch niet zo dat alle omstandigheden uiteindelijk irrelevant zijn voor geluk. 'Oorlog', 'honger' en 'onderdrukking' doen er wel degelijk afbreuk aan; zelfs als men nauwelijks beter weet of als de burens erger getroffen worden. Het is dus niet helemaal onmogelijk om middels maatschappelijke verbeteringen bij te dragen tot een groter geluk. Die mogelijkheid bij voorbaat afschrijven is wetenschappelijk kortzichtig en politiek hoogst gevaarlijk.

Het misverstand dat geluk nergens iets toe doet. De opvatting dat bevordering van geluk het hoogste doel moet zijn wordt nogal eens gepareerd met de stelling dat geluk van geen enkel belang is: niet als zodanig en niet zijn consequenties.

De opvatting dat geluk als zodanig niet erg belangrijk is stoelt veelal op de veronderstelling dat de persoonlijke waardering van het bestaan vaak maar weinig te maken heeft met het 'werkelijke welzijn' van het individu, ondermeer omdat zijn waarderend oordeel sterk beïnvloed zou worden door toevallige modeverschijnselen en vergelijkingen en omdat zelfbedrog en berusting het (wisselend) oordeel sterk zouden vertekenen. Deze veronderstellingen zijn ieder goeddeels onjuist. Mede daarom blijkt persoonlijk geluk ook wel degelijk verbonden met aspecten van 'werkelijk welzijn'.

Voor een aantal, in het algemeen belangrijk geachte, zaken maakt het verder nogal uit of mensen vrede met hun bestaan hebben of niet. Dissatisfactie schaadt mensen in hun 'gezondheid', remt 'activiteit en bemoeilijkt het functioneren in 'intieme relaties'. Op maatschappelijk niveau remt dit de produktiviteit op velerlei terreinen. Onvrede met het bestaan schept ook een klimaat waarin politieke problemen buiten proportie kunnen groeien. Als zodanig strekt het belang van geluk verder dan plezier in het leven alleen.