Not v. helpful
Not much used in analysis.

Comments on the following case histories

1. It is obvious that each individuals description of poverty is related to their own personal experience of poverty, but that is not to say that similar descriptions of the nature of poverty do not come from very different individuals and experiences. Thus the self-made manager (case VI) who was very punishing in his attitude to poverty gave the cut description "undernourished, ill-clothed people". While the independent old lady who was managing on a pension and help in kind from relatives and who had a much more generous attitude to the poor gave a rather similar description, i.e. "no food and no coal, that's poverty, poor things". Any standardised coding procedure such as our own would be likely to place both these comments in the same category. It is likely that a distinction between punishing and expansive attitudes to the poor and poverty will be more easily related to factors in an individuals personal experience than will their perception of the nature of poverty which is a perception which may be ~~due~~ open to rather less variation.

2. A large part of the variation in description of poverty which we are measuring is in fact a different ~~[illegible]~~ type of reaction to the question rather than a different ~~[illegible]~~ description of poverty. The two most commonly coded replies were the 'subsistence' category and the 'group poverty, other' category. Now the answers coded as 'subsistence' are, indeed, descriptions of poverty, but the answers coded 'group poverty' are usually attempts to describe the causes of poverty thus case II who described poverty in terms of a "person who is incapable of working and has no money for essentials" is doing more than just just describe poverty, he is trying to explain it as well.

It may therefore be misleading to imagine that our measured frequencies are suggesting a wide variation in the description of poverty, it would seem more likely that there is in fact a predominant recognition of poverty along the lines of our 'subsistence' category and that this is predominantly associated with particular groups in our society such as old age pensioners, widows, the disabled and others who cannot work.

3. We are bound to run into responses which do not really answer the question in the way we wanted or expected. Thus case I, gives an ambivalent response in describing poverty, she does not seem to be sure if it exists or not and does not really describe it for us. She does say something about its causation, however.

Case V gives us a response which is a description of her own personal experience in a very immediate sense * and would, therefore, appear to be qualitatively different from the other 5 responses given here.

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* She was presumably coded "relative to past" in her description of poverty. It is worth noting that this category contains two rather different types of description i) relative to the historical past (as in case V), ii) relative to an individual's personal past experience eg. "a person who has come down in the world". As these are both accounting for a small proportion of the responses it is not very important.

CASE HISTORY I (103133301)

The first case is an example of an individual who has been left, through the force of circumstance in rather dire financial straights but who nevertheless has been able to make her situation more tolerable through the use of society's social services. This old lady of 74 lives in a council flat on the first floor and has been living as a council tenant since her husband died three years ago. She lives on her pension of £4..10s and receives £3..6..0 from the Supplementary Benefit most of which goes to pay her rent of £2..19s.0d. It is calculated that her net disposable income comes to 99% of her S.B. entitlement. She appears to have no assets saved.

Although she does not get any financial help from her 4 children, only one of whom comes to visit her regularly she does get by with the help of the council's social services. Twice a week a council home help comes to tidy her flat up and although she is hard of hearing (has a hearing aid which she uses on special occasions) and has arthritis in her knees she goes out to the old peoples centre every weekday for lunch, which only costs one shilling. She was an early morning office cleaner (6 years at L.S.E. and 15 years at the Law Courts) while her husband was a van-driver for a greengrocer at Covent Garden and left her no occupational pension. When asked about her social class she said that she "didn't know" what you're on about". She felt worse off than the rest of the family financially, about the same as others round her way, she didn't know about the average for the country as a whole and felt she had seen better and worse times. She did find it especially difficult to manage on her income but was never poor. She felt that "there is no real poverty today now there is the welfare to help out those not so well off. If there is poverty it must be peoples own fault because there is enough to go round these days".

P.T.O.

When asked what could be done about poverty she said "There is not the poverty there used to be, everyone can manage to live comfortably today, look at me - I'm happy."

Thus although she says she is sometimes lonely and would appear to be in objective poverty we can see that her personal experience of existing social services has effected her perception of the nature and existence of poverty.

CASE HISTORY II (105118201)

This is a case of a young worker who can be said to be in objective poverty* at the present time but who can be reasonably sure that this will not continue in the future. He is not entitled to any of the supplementary revenues or benefits which older individuals could use in such financial circumstances but does receive some help from his relatives. He (20 yrs. old) is a clerical officer with the civil service, earns an average of £47/month ~~clerical~~ take-home pay and also receives about £1 worth of gifts each week from his parents. He pays 4 guineas a week for a furnished flatlet in London. He was previously at school and feels that he is better off than his family, than the average in the country and that his own situation is getting better. He didn't know about other relative situation of others in the neighbourhood where he lives. He does not find it especially difficult to manage on his income and says he is never poor. He goes out a great deal, to the pub, cinema & social club. (10 nights in last fortnight).

He described poverty in terms of a "person who is incapable of working and has no money for essentials". He believes poverty is caused by a combination of factors and says that "more training for people" and "more voluntary help between people" would help fight it. However he does not "believe in socialism or communism - you know - grabbing from the rich. I'm an out and out Tory".

[* He appears to be coded at 85% of S.B. + HC. However on my calculation it is 139.2% ?]

CASE HISTORY III (10423630 1).

This case can be compared with I. Another old lady of 74, widowed 8 years. She lives in her own terraced house which is fully owned by her. She lives on her old age pension of £4.50/week and gets gifts from her relatives which she values at about £1/week. She gets a little help in minor emergencies and goes to stay with her late husband's brother and family every other weekend. She gets a rate rebate on her rates but says she will pay for her new false teeth although she seems to know she need not do so. She could probably get something from the supplementary benefit but would rather not so long as she can 'manage'. She also refuses any direct financial help from her brother-in-law, although obviously gets help in kind. She has about £200 saved.

She says she is about as well off as the rest of her family. Some off than others round about, is better off than the average in the country and feels her own situation is about the same as ever. She does not find it difficult to manage but does sometimes feel poor, at Xmas in particular. She described poverty as "no food and no coal, that's poverty, poor things." When asked what could be done about poverty she said "I don't know what could be done, its difficult to say. I don't know. Higher pensions would help old people."

CASE HISTORY IV (1011051) Asphalt labourer (30 yrs. old), and his wife, two young babies. Average take home pay is £25 (but basic weekly rate is £12·3/week). Calculated to be on about 144% of S.B. + Housing cost. Is paying a mortgage of £26·2/month. Have no savings. Not had holiday in last 12 months. When asked his social class the husband replied "the workers - we need money to survive - we need regular work for that." He considers themselves better off than family, about the same as people in the neighbourhood, and about the same as the average in the country, and better off than they were previously. He does not find it specially difficult to manage on his income, is never poor, although he does recognise poverty to exist.

This description of poverty was given "going without food to feed your kids and then fall ill because you still can't give them a proper home to grow up in."

He supported (or rather pushed out) industry as not providing the right jobs. He said that one answer to poverty was to "provide more jobs and higher wages to force those who can't be bothered to work hard to get stuck in".

[This would appear to be an example of a family man with heavy financial commitments and a comparatively small income. He is just about totally dependent on overtime (48 hours the last week). This would seem to be reflected in his emphasis on the importance of regular work and high wages to keep the working class out of poverty].

CASE HISTORY V (101237301) Widow of 56, husband died two years ago living with her twenty one year old daughter who is a shorthand typist (no info. on her income because she was not happy about the interview). Tried to work for six weeks in February ('68) but had to give it up because of her bad back (sounds like a slipped disc). So she gets widows pension + £1·4 from Supplementary Benefit. She is renting at the local council, a terraced house at £3·4 a week [surely the S.B. should be paying all her rent]. She does not pay the extra rent usually asked for if have a lodger (ie. her daughter). The only savings she has a £55 in a Post Office Savings Bank. Did have a one week holiday together. Get some help from neighbours and gives it when necessary. Sees other daughter and children once a week. Feels worse off than rest of family, worse off than other people round-about, worse off than the average in the country and worse off than was previously. Does find it especially difficult to manage on income. Doesn't know if she is poor or not, she said "you don't like to admit to being poor - you just say you're not well off." Says there is no real poverty nowadays. When asked to describe poverty said "I can remember the days when I used to line up at the soup kitchen that's why I hate having handed downs now. And there were days when I had to stop off school because it was my brother's turn for the boots." [sometimes does buy second-hand clothing now]

Didn't know whose fault poverty was.

When asked what could be done about poverty said "If those at the top know they go out of their way to help them. But there's no due poverty."

[The woman disliked being interviewed and daughter wouldn't be interviewed, said that this kind of activity was

P.T.O.

meters. Evidence of considerable hardship here though difficult to say how much exactly because of lack of info. on how much the daughter was bringing in.]

CASE HISTORY VI (315124201)

Husband (45), wife (39) and daughter (9)

He is a company director in an engineering company earns about £3000 per annum when asked about allowances, benefits and pensions said "nothing from that thieving crowd" [referring to Wilson's Government]. His father was a builder's labourer and he calls himself "lower middle class". He was very bitter about Wilson's government and said he had a man at his firm who could raise out those who only worked for a spell sufficient to be able to claim unemployment benefit. Complained of a fitter who found £15 a week too little pay. He refuses to fill in any government form unless threatened with prosecution and then he inverts figures (he says). Thought he was better off than the rest of the family, better off than others in the neighbourhood, better off than average, better off than ever. Not difficult to manage. Said there is no poverty, it is their own fault if poor. Described poverty as "undernourished, ill-clothed people". What could be done about poverty? "I don't think there is." [i.e. anything that could be done].

[In many ways the prototype of the upwardly mobile, self-made man. Very hard].

YOU POOR NOW? x DIFFICULT TO MANAGE?

YOU POOR NOW? ↓	NO	D.K.	YES		
ALWAYS	1.0% 14		23.5% 139		7.7% 153
SOMETIMES	9.8% 136	20.0% 3	35.4% 209		17.5% 348
NEVER	88.5% 1224	66.7% 10	39.3% 232		73.7% 1466
D.K.	0.6% 9	13.3% 2	1.9% 11		1.1% 22
	1383	15	591		1989

Table XIII

Subjective Poverty Index x Description of Poverty

Previously (see previous notes) we measured subjective poverty by merely asking whether people felt they could genuinely say that they were poor. There is some evidence that individuals do not find it easy to own to being poor and. For this reason and because it is a rather too dichotomous variable we have constructed a 5 point subjective poverty scale. Each chief wage earner of the household is asked the following questions.

How well off do you feel these days on your income? i) For example compared with the rest of your family would you say you are :-

Better off, about the same, worse off, don't know.

ii) compared with other people round here of your age would you say you are :- etc.

iii) Compared with the average in the country would you say you are :-

iv) On the whole is your situation getting better or worse?

v) Do you find it specially difficult to manage on your income?

This gives us a more sensitive measure of individuals degree of subjective poverty. We see that over 50% of the population score at least one point, whereas only 7.7% would agree to being always poor, or 17.5% to be sometimes poor.

When x-tabulated against description of poverty we do not see any variation of type of

description in the majority of cases, but due to the ~~[illegible] of~~ nature of the coded categories this is not surprising. It is worth noting, however, that the subjectively poor do not seem to have any greater tendency to give straight forward descriptions of poverty (ie. 'starvation', 'subsistence', 'relative to others', 'relative to past' categories) rather than 'causal descriptions' (ie. 'secondary', group poverty other, group poverty working).

There is a tendency for them to deny the existence of poverty rather less than those who do not feel poor, or feel less poor. The degree of variation is not large because only 7.7% of the total feel there is no poverty, but it does suggest some relationships which can be more fully investigated later.

There is also a tendency for the subjectively poor to take a less punishing attitude to the poor. This is shown in the smaller numbers scoring 4 & 5 giving a 'secondary' description of poverty, this being a causal description that puts the blame on the poor themselves due to poor budgeting, gambling, drinking, poor family planning etc. Again the figures are only suggestive, but warrant further investigation.

P.S. I have also done X-tabs on Description of Poverty

- x Household Type I.
- x the % leaving school at 15 in that ward (a measure of the area's poverty)
- x High, Medium, Low Income area (based on proportion of the Labour vote)

but no interesting variations are to be seen. Not surprising, but I have included them here for your perusal if you are interested in them.

Subjective Poverty Index x Description of Poverty

TABLE XIII

Subjective Poverty Index	STARVATION	SUBSISTENCE	RELATIVE TO OTHERS	RELATIVE TO PAST	SECONDARY	NONE	OTHER	D.K.	GROUP POVERTY	GROUP POVERTY WORKING	
0	64 7·6%	262 31·0%	14 1·6%	26 3·1%	65 7·7%	67 7·9%	72 8·5%	15 1·8%	180 21·3%	81 9·6%	43·2% 846
1	34 7·3%	140 30·0%	6 1·3%	25 5·3%	41 8·8%	46 9·8%	32 6·8%	10 2·1%	100 21·4%	33 7·1%	23·8% 467
2	17 6·2%	92 33·3%	9 3·3%	10 3·6%	34 12·3%	19 6·9%	18 6·5%	6 2·2%	51 18·5%	20 7·2%	14·1% 276
3	16 7·7%	67 32·4%	3 1·4%	14 6·8%	17 8·2%	11 5·3%	17 8·2%	7 3·4%	47 22·7%	8 3·9%	10·6% 207
4	11 10·5%	35 33·3%	7 6·7%	8 7·6%	5 4·8%	6 5·7%	9 8·6%		20 19·0%	4 3·8%	5·4% 105
5	3 5·1%	21 35·6%		7 11·9%	1 1·7%	2 3·4%	6 10·2%	1 1·7%	14 23·7%	4 6·8%	3·0% 59
	145 7·4%	617 31·5%	39 2·0%	90 4·6%	163 8·3%	151 7·7%	154 7·9%	39 2·0%	412 21·0%	150 7·6%	1960

HH.D. TYPE. ↓	Household Type I x Description of Poverty.										TOTALS
	STARVATION	SUBSISTENCE	RELATIVE TO OTHERS	RELATIVE TO PAST	SECONDARY	NONE	OTHER	D.K.	GROUP POVERTY	GROUP POVERTY WORKING	
1 MAN 60+ YRS	2 5.0%	17 42.5%		4 10.0%		3 7.5%	5 12.5%	1 2.5%	7 17.5%	1 2.5%	2.0% 40
1 MAN <60 YRS.	9 14.7%	21 34.4%	1 1.6%	4 6.6%	2 3.3%	5 8.2%	6 9.8%		11 18.0%	2 3.3%	3.1% 61
1 WOMAN 60+ YRS	12 6.4%	50 26.6%	4 2.1%	17 9.0%	19 10.1%	26 13.8%	10 5.3%	7 3.7%	32 17.0%	11 5.8%	9.6% 188
1 WOMAN <60 YRS.	3 5.1%	14 23.7%	3 5.08%	1 1.69%	2 3.39%	7 11.9%	6 10.2%		13 22.0%	10 16.9%	3.0% 59
1 MAN + 1 WOMAN	40 7.6%	150 28.7%	7 1.3%	27 5.2%	50 9.6%	42 8.0%	44 8.4%	8 1.5%	116 22.2%	39 7.5%	26.7% 523
1 MAN + 1W + 1 child	9 6.04%	46 30.9%	5 3.4%	5 3.4%	8 5.4%	10 6.7%	7 4.7%	4 2.7%	43 28.9%	12 8.0%	7.6% 149
1M + 1W + 2 C's	14 7.65%	63 34.6%	1 0.5%	4 2.2%	15 8.2%	13 7.1%	21 11.5%	4 2.2%	33 18.0%	15 8.2%	9.3% 183
1M + 1W + 3 C's	7 7.9%	37 42.0%	4 4.5%		8 9.1%	3 3.4%	7 7.9%		14 15.9%	8 9.1%	4.5% 88
1M + 1W + 4+ C's	6 11.8%	19 37.2%	1 2.0%	2 3.9%	6 11.8%	2 3.9%	2 3.9%		8 15.7%	5 9.8%	2.6% 51
3 adults	17 8.0%	71 33.3%	4 1.9%	10 4.7%	20 9.4%	18 8.4%	16 7.5%	5 2.3%	45 21.1%	7 3.3%	10.9% 213
3 adults + C	10 6.8%	46 31.3%	2 1.4%	3 2.0%	10 6.8%	10 6.8%	14 9.5%	5 3.4%	31 21.1%	16 10.9%	7.5% 147
4 adults	5 6.0%	29 34.9%	1 1.2%	3 3.6%	8 9.6%	2 2.4%	5 6.0%	1 1.2%	24 28.9%	5 6.0%	4.2% 83
Others w/o kids	3 4.1%	23 31.5%		5 6.8%	8 10.96%	6 8.2%	5 6.8%		15 20.5%	8 10.96%	3.7% 73
Others with kids	8 7.8%	31 30.4%	6 5.9%	5 4.9%	7 6.9%	4 3.9%	6 5.9%	4 3.9%	20 19.6%	11 10.8%	5.2% 102
TOTALS	145 7.4%	617 31.5%	39 2.0%	90 4.6%	163 8.3%	151 7.7%	154 7.9%	39 2.0%	412 21.0%	150 7.6%	1960

% Leaving School at 15 years old x Description of Poverty

	STARVATION	SUBSISTENCE	RELATIVE TO OTHERS	RELATIVE TO PAST	SECONDARY	NONE	POVERTY OTHER	POVERTY WORKING	OTHER	D.K.	TOTAL
-40%	1.4% 2	0.2% 1			0.6% 1	0.7% 1	0.73% 3	0.7% 1			0.46% 9
40-	0.7% 1 3.1%	1.8% 11 34.4%	2 6.2%	3.3% 3 9.4%	2.4% 4 12.5%	1.3% 2 6.2%	0.97% 4 12.5%	1.3% 2 6.2%	1.9% 3 9.4%		1.63% 32
45-	4.1% 6 6.0%	5.8% 36 36.0%	2 2.0%	3.3% 3 3.0%	2.4% 4 4.0%	6.0% 9 9.0%	6.3% 26 26.0%	3.3% 5 5.0%	5.8% 9 9.0%		5.10% 100
50-	1.4% 2 2.6%	4.5% 28 35.9%	2 2.6%	1.1% 1 1.3%	2.4% 4 5.1%	3.3% 5 6.4%	4.6% 19 24.4%	6.0% 9 11.5%	3.9% 6 7.7%	2 2.6%	4.0% 78
55-	9.0% 13 6.1%	11.3% 70 32.9%	3 1.4%	16.7% 15 7.0%	11.7% 19 8.9%	11.3% 17 8.0%	9.2% 38 17.8%	15.3% 23 10.8%	6.5% 10 4.7%	5 2.3%	10.9% 213
60-	6.9% 10 5.5%	9.4% 58 31.9%	1 0.5%	7.8% 7 3.8%	8.0% 13 7.1%	12.6% 19 10.4%	9.0% 37 20.33%	12.7% 19 10.4%	9.1% 14 7.7%	4 2.2%	9.3% 182
65-	13.1% 19 9.4%	10.2% 63 31.3%		3.3% 3 1.5%	12.9% 21 10.4%	7.3% 11 5.5%	10.7% 44 21.9%	8.0% 12 6.0%	13.1% 21 10.4%	7 3.5%	10.3% 201
70-	20.0% 29 10.5%	15.1% 93 33.6%	8 2.9%	10.0% 9 3.2%	13.5% 22 7.9%	9.3% 14 5.0%	14.3% 59 21.3%	14.7% 22 7.9%	11.7% 18 6.5%	3 1.1%	14.1% 277
75-	21.4% 31 8.7%	16.5% 102 28.7%	7 2.0%	15.6% 14 3.9%	12.3% 20 5.6%	14.6% 22 6.2%	18.4% 76 21.4%	20.7% 31 8.7%	26.8% 41 11.5%	11 3.1%	18.1% 355
80-	2.1% 3 1.7%	8.9% 55 30.6%	3 1.7%	8.9% 8 4.4%	16.0% 26 14.4%	8.0% 12 6.7%	11.4% 47 26.1%	4.7% 7 3.9%	10.4% 16 8.9%	3 1.7%	9.2% 180
85+	9.7% 14 8.1%	8.7% 54 31.4%	3 1.7%	15.6% 14 8.1%	8.0% 13 7.6%	13.9% 21 12.2%	6.5% 27 15.7%	6.7% 10 5.8%	9.1% 14 8.1%	2 1.2%	8.8% 172
NO FIGURES	10.3% 15 9.3%	7.5% 46 28.6%	8 5.0%	14.4% 13 8.1%	9.8% 16 9.9%	11.9% 18 11.2%	7.8% 32 19.9%	6.0% 9 5.6%	1.3% 2 1.2%	2 1.2%	8.2% 161
	145 7.4%	617 31.5%	39 2.0%	90 4.6%	163 8.3%	151 7.7%	412 21.0%	150 7.60%	154 7.9%	39 2.0%	1960

High, Medium Low Income Area x Description of Poverty.
(according to % Labour voting)

	STARVATION	SUBSISTENCE	RELATIVE TO OTHERS	RELATIVE TO PAST	SECONDARY	NONE	OTHER	D.K.	GROUP POVERTY	GROUP POVERTY WORKING	TOTAL
HIGH	24 5.2%	162 35.3%	13 2.8%	23 5.0%	38 8.3%	35 7.6%	43 9.4%	7 1.5%	79 17.2%	35 7.6%	23.4% 459
MEDIUM	30 5.6%	164 30.6%	9 1.7%	16 3.0%	54 10.1%	32 6.0%	50 9.3%	5 0.9%	133 24.8%	43 8.0%	27.3% 536
LOW	53 10.6%	147 29.4%	12 2.4%	30 6.0%	27 5.4%	45 9.0%	41 8.2%	8 1.6%	99 19.8%	38 7.6%	25.5% 500
RURAL + N. IRELAND	38 8.2%	144 31.0%	5 1.1%	21 4.5%	44 9.5%	39 8.4%	20 4.3%	19 4.1%	101 21.7%	34 7.3%	23.7% 465
	145 7.4%	617 31.5%	39 2.0%	90 4.6%	163 8.3%	151 7.7%	154 7.9%	39 2.0%	412 21.0%	150 7.6%	~~1865~~ 1960