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June 1985. I await patiently for my 'A' level results. I feel much the same as I did whilst waiting for my 11 plus marks. For seven years I have revised for exams and tests, some results good - others bad. Each exam has tried my patience, nerves and determination - each time revision has provoked tiredness, moodiness and unhappiness.

I have awoken each morning with the radio alarm, "adorned" myself with the school uniform and travelled to the "building" in order to respond to shrill bells throughout the day. The school rules were pumped into me and the drug - homework - was heavy in dose. At an early age I had been conducted to open and close doors for teachers and to stand to attention each time one of them entered the room. Whilst tolerating insults such as "snob" from alien school kids, my grey knee socks, boater and grey tunic flung aside, myself revealed: I found a boyfriend. I rushed my homework and began to hate the education system for stealing so much of my time. At this time I was having lessons on "reproduction" in biology lessons. We drew endless diagrams which we had to learn by heart for tests and whereas reproduction was new and interesting to us in the beginning, it soon became boring to discuss and the topic became stale and flat. However although they had destroyed interest in yet another topic, outside of school I was learning about life for myself.

"Poor child ... she was as lonely in her trouble as if she had been the only child in the civilised world of that day who had come out of school-life with a soul untrained for inevitable struggles."

Option picking was a mighty hard task - as we could hardly make our own choices. Subjects had been arranged in columns from which we could only pick one - so hard luck if we wanted two subjects in the same column. If there were not enough teachers a child was automatically shifted. I remember countless parents' evenings, each time hearing the same comments. Reports were similar; I knew even before the envelope was opened the exact words of a whole page consisting of either "Pleasing effort" or "Disappointing exam result". Dedicated teachers were easy to find; the writing was small, neat and filled the page - there were not many. Most irritating was a statement which contradicted my own personality. How can teachers ever know a pupil in an environment governed by rules and conformity?

In my fourth year the school became comprehensive and talk about new life - it was more like an increased hell. I understood that this was to be the beginning of a serious term; the change did not help for as well as adapting ourselves to work "steadily", we had to accept new teachers and pupils. I cannot admit that the school improved as we were told it would. Teachers had been obliged to teach subjects in which they were not specialised, hence driving them away from the school.

It is now June, 1986, and once again I find myself waiting for 'A' level results. I left school and for the last year have attended college as a part-time student. Who knows what the slip of paper will reveal this year? I have played the game like everyone else and am determined that I will not be eliminated. Most students have been labelled "failure" at least once:

"Today I look at him shattered and destroyed wondering which way to turn after being expelled from school during his final year of 'A' levels."

All I can say is that I hate what the education system has done to me. To be myself and to be happy if only ... I have appreciated the chance to participate in this exhibition so that I may be seen as myself. Thank you, Robert Lenkiewicz.