

Free essay about how my social environment has affected who i am today

[Family](#), [Parents](#)



Many factors and influences combine to form one's social environment. This essay considers and discusses those that I believe had the greatest influence in my own case. In truth, they are all connected with family background. Of all of them, my home environment was, and to some extent still is the most important. My parents were working class - literally as well as sociologically. My father worked on the railways and was often away from home overnight, and my mother worked full-time as a sewing machinist in order to bring enough money into the rented home to keep us all in food and clothing. As the eldest child, I had to take on a certain amount of responsibility even while still of school age. Each afternoon I would come in from school and begin preparing the evening meal, sending my younger sister along to the corner shop if we were lacking any needed ingredients. I believe those duties taught me to be responsible and to appreciate the value of money, and that principle was underlined when I needed a bicycle to get to my new school. There was precious little money to spend on luxuries and vacations, etc. Hence, as my parents could not afford to buy one for me, I had to get a job delivering newspapers early every morning to pay for a new bike. My parents were totally supportive and encouraged me to work hard at my studies, just as they worked hard at their jobs. Neither of them ever drew unemployment benefit, and I believe they inspired me always to work for what I get and to never expect to get money without earning it. Whilst I understand the purpose of social benefits and the reasons why for some they are essential, I am proud to say that I have never wanted nor needed them for myself.

Other positive effects of my family background included a strong feeling of

security that came from being part of a warm and loving family environment. I had not only two hard-working parents, but also siblings to socialize with and enjoy shared experiences. I sympathize with anyone who grew up as an only child and did not have that advantage. I also believe that my working class origins had a powerful influence on my ambitions in the context of a career choice. Potentially lucrative occupations such as a lawyer or doctor seemed unattainable. In fact to be perfectly frank, I had scant idea of what those “ jobs” entailed; they were careers enjoyed by “ other people.”

Although I was fortunate enough to obtain a good high school education and then went on to college, my ambitions for a future career were to a considerable extent colored by what I knew; what my friends’ parents did for a living, and so on.

The third factor that influenced whom I am today is also very much connected with family. I was brought up to respect and obey both of my parents. Their word was law. I believe that having respect for their authority (even though not always agreeing with them!) was important in shaping my attitudes as an adult. Today I see too many examples of individuals lacking all respect for authority, and as a consequence often being a burden on society. Unfortunately, the blame for that often rests with the parents, or in the case of single parents, the absence of a father figure. There are also too many instances of parents neglecting their responsibilities in that direction, resulting in increased disruption and violence in schools, and higher rates of juvenile crime. However, I consider myself fortunate that my parents did teach me right from wrong, and brought me up reflecting their own morals

and ethics. Because I firmly believe that those characteristics are important, I shall endeavor to do the same for my own children, too.