NOTES FOR KEYWORDS WEEKEND ON "Aspirational"

These are some notes and excerpts from sources related to the keyword "aspirational"> As ever, there is no need to read these before the weekend, but it might be helpful. There may well be further sources to add and develop.

From Oxford English Dictionary online:

1. Defined: Belonging to or characterized by aspiration.

1887 H. R. Haweis *Christ & Christianity* I. iii. 83 Its sense of mystery feeble, and consequently its lift and aspirational power almost *nil*.
1916 A. M. Rihbany *Syrian Christ* (1919) ii. ii. 66 As pious in his imprecations and curses as he is in his aspirational prayer.
1916 A. M. Rihbany *Syrian Christ* (1919) v. iv. 250 His infatuation is known as..pure, or aspirational love.
1967 *Listener* 30 Nov. 731/2 Everybody banging away at that final aspirational aria.

2. **Draft additions March 2009**

orig. *Marketing*. Of a product, advertising, etc.: representative of or associated with a sophisticated, stylish, or otherwise attractive lifestyle to which consumers might aspire.

3. **More Recent Examples**

1981 *Wall St. Jrnl.* 14 Jan. ii. 29/5 Harrah's is offering free parking and trying what it calls 'aspirational' TV advertising that forgoes views of casino and hotel interiors and furnishings in favor of a stylish male customer who, while dressing, daydreams of showgirls, gourmet dinners and gaming tables.
1989 A. Lorenz *Fighting Chance* ii. 51 Dunlop set out to change all that by developing new designs for more 'aspirational' products.
1998 *Newsweek* 23 Nov. 67/1 Detailed research reports tell her that the reader wants 'aspirational' clothing: unwearable or unaffordable designs by European couturiers.
2004 *N.Y. Times* (National ed.) 2 Aug. a1/6 Publishers are introducing shopping magazines as low-risk, cheaper alternatives to traditional aspirational publications.

New Keywords (2005): Keyword "Desire"

"Desire is both ineffable and at the heart of how we understand ourselves. "Anything your heart desires": from remodelled bodies to the perfect partner and designer child, the advertising industry promises that every desire can be satisfied. Of course, the satiation of desire is not quite that simple. The fulfilment of one set of desires often only brings on more desire. As many have argued…capitalism is premised on a cycle of satisfying desire and creating new desires. Paradoxically, this aspirational economy runs on the implicit knowledge that human desire outstrips the range of commodities on offer "

George MacDonald (1824-1905), writer and fantasy novelist

Ambition is but the evil shadow of aspiration

Matthew Arnold Culture and Anarchy (1869):

Arnold wrote of culture as "being a pursuit of our total perfection by means of getting to know, on all matters which most concern us, the best that has been thought and said in the world; and through this knowledge turning a stream of fresh and free thought upon our stock notions and habits, which we now follow staunchly but mechanically, vainly imagining that there is a virtue in following them staunchly which makes up for the mischief of following them mechanically."

Charles Dickens The Mystery of Edwin Drood 1870

Thank you, quite well. And you, ma'am ?" returned Mr. Grewgious. " I am as well," said Mrs. Billickin, becoming **aspirational** with excess of faintness, " as I hever ham." " My ward and an elderly lady," said Mr. Grewgious, " wish to find a genteel ...

Times 25 September 1984

Next is the role model for the high street. “Aspirational, affordable, collectible” are the buzz words.

Times 2 June 1986

“The last two years have seen the rise of healthy living and aspirational life-style magazines.”

Times 3 February 1987

“The big bosses of Britain’s department stores have a new buzz word. “Aspirational” is the name they apply to their target customers and to the new mood that is sweeping through the once-staid shops… “Aspirational” captures perfectly the spirit of our times in which the shopper is increasingly demanding, discerning and disloyal.”

Times 22 October 1988

On the singer Anita Baker:

“…..She and her record producer,. Michael Powell, have hit upon a setting which revives some of the more natural properties of soul music while concentrating on opulent ballads styled and paced to flatter the sensibilities of what the marketing people call an aspirational audience.”

Times 16 May 1992

“Buyers now expect a guest bedroom, its desirability connected to an aspirational gracious lifestyle rather than practical need”

Times September 29 1992 Comment by Matthew Parris

“The opposition parties need the underclass like a hole in the head. Their politicians well know that concentrating on losers only dulls a party’s shine among the upwardly aspirational voter it needs to attract”

Times 12 December 2009

George Osborne "…middle England, the aspirational classes who want to get on in life, who are out working for their families"

Keywords in Australian Politics (2006)

"Aspirational voters, sometimes just called 'aspirationals', thus describe an apparent value shift among some Australians, associated with a change in voting behaviour. Ideas of class, equality and welfare are bound up in most explanations of the aspirational phenomenon. Aspirational voters want to move from unskilled jobs and older working class suburbs to middle class occupations and new suburbs."

Jon Cruddas The Future of Social Democracy (2010)

"if New Labour at its best embodied the high aspirations of fleshed-out liberalism, its restricted understanding of the scope for change betrayed the cynical assumptions of its hollowed-out alter ego. It talked quite rightly about the need for the party to broaden its appeal to win the support of `aspirational' voters, but equated aspiration with nothing more than crude acquisitiveness. This sucked out its optimism and its radicalism…"

Comment on UK Polling Report blog, July 2015, about the narrow Labour win in Chester in June's general election:

"I think Chester is clearly trending towards Labour in the long-term going off the latest result because more and more people are moving in from Liverpool and Merseyside, many of whom will likely be aspirational middle-class public sector professionals who may work as lecturers and academics for example."

http://ukpollingreport.co.uk/2015guide/chestercityof/comment-page-3/#comments