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ABSTRACT

Based on occupation and industry data from the one percent 1970 Public Use Sample, a life-cycle job typology is used to distinguish youthful "stopgap" jobs from career jobs. Census and NLSY data indicate that stopgap jobs represent a life-cycle phenomenon for both black and white male youths, although more so for whites. Stopgap employment increased for young white males between 1970 and 1980 but decreased for blacks. Education and experience variables make a substantial contribution to the steep age gradient of stopgap employment and are important in explaining black-white differences in this age pattern in 1970 as well as the 1970-1980 changes. Implications of these differences for the youth labor market are explored. The extensive employment of more educated whites in low-level stopgap jobs places less educated youth (black and white) at a competitive disadvantage. Furthermore, factors that negatively affect the labor market position of non-disadvantaged youths may indirectly affect the employment position of low-skilled youth.

INTRODUCTION

In this chapter we develop a life-cycle job typology as a tool for analyzing how the nature of young men's career-entry process can vary over time and among

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different social groups. The rationale for creating the typology is based on two major premises. The first is that the transition to work is frequently a rather messy process rather than a clearly defined and easily measured concrete step. Just how messy the transition is will vary among socioeconomic groups and over time, depending on exogenous conditions. One consequence is that the current socioeconomic status of young people who are experiencing delayed as opposed to early transitions will be affected; this may, in turn, influence their long-term socioeconomic status as well. For example, if obtaining full-time employment is the operational definition of having made the transition to an "adult" work career but if blacks chronically have a harder time finding a full-time job than whites and more so in recessionary periods, then we will be systematically overlooking some of the early career-cycle difficulties and sources of the low socioeconomic status of blacks compared to whites. Another consequence of the varying messiness of the transition process is that it can have a strong effect on other life course transitions such as the transition to marriage and raising a family because the latter are heavily influenced by the achievement of economic "adulthood." Hence, a more discriminating measurement of the career-entry process should also be relevant to the analysis of marriage and family behavior. Messy career transition may also affect measures that have traditionally been important in studying the economic returns from socioeconomic achievements. Thus, a measure of potential work experience, as it is usually defined (in terms of age and school years completed), could be misleading if young people vary markedly in the timing of their transition to regular full-time employment. In a time of rapid post-school transitions, potential work experience will be a more meaningful indicator of human capital investment than in a period of delayed and difficult transitions, characterized by frequent spells of unemployment and short-term dead-end jobs.

The second major premise underlying our analysis is the conviction that one must go beyond a purely individualistic approach in studying the career-entry process and what it signifies for socioeconomic achievement. One can certainly obtain an understanding of the nature and speed of career transitions by studying the amount of time young people work. However, focusing on individuals per se may provide limited insights into how and why the timing of their transitions vary if this is partly a function of variations in available opportunities rather than just the result of their individual characteristics. We believe that labor market structure cannot be ignored since it will provide both opportunities and impediments for making a timely transition to adult economic roles. Moreover, the balance of these opportunities and handicaps should vary over time and among socioeconomic groups.

In sum, our goal is to provide a measure of one type of labor market structure—life-cycle jobs—which should make it possible to relate occupations to economic change and differentiation, on the one hand, and to young men's

transition to work on the other. In short, our work develops tools for studying how the relevant historical and socioeconomic context affects individuals' early life achievements.

Measuring the Transition to Work

Whether or not a young man has made the transition to an adult work role is a critical issue in many areas of social research, yet it is not always fully appreciated how difficult it can be to determine if this transition has actually occurred. Casual employment is quite common among students and may continue for some years after leaving school. In this respect, Osterman (1980) has argued that:

> in the first several years after leaving school young people are frequently in what might be termed a *moratorium* period, a period in which adventure seeking, sex, and peer group activities are all more important than work. Some years later comes *settling* down, a stage characterized by a very different set of attitudes about work (p. 16).

The possibility of such a moratorium period raises several analytical problems. For example, since the interests of those engaged in social mobility research are ill served by measuring inter- and intra-generational occupational mobility relative to the kind of casual work characteristic of a moratorium period, identifying the first job in the "settling down" phase is of obvious importance. Life course analysis, and in particular studies which emphasize the importance of normative sequencing in role transitions, also depend on the ability to ascertain the timing of transitions in an unambiguous fashion. Determining the timing of the transition to an adult work career can be a particularly troublesome issue since employment per se can be such a poor indicator.

Given the importance of measuring a young man's "adult" work status, how has this usually been accomplished and what might be some of the limitations of previous approaches? The classic measurement strategy taken by social mobility researchers has been to define the beginning of an adult career as the "first full-time civilian job after leaving school for the last time" (Featherman and Hauser 1978). The goal is to eliminate those in casual employment, either because they were currently students, were experiencing an interruption in school attendance, or were working at part-time jobs. This approach has also frequently been employed in life course analyses, partly because a number of such studies have used mobility surveys such as the OCG-II (Cooney and Hogan 1991; Hogan 1978).

A fundamental characteristic of the social mobility approach to ascertaining adult career status is that it is designed for retrospective data collection. Definitions such as those cited earlier are much more difficult to implement

for prospective studies that follow panels of young people over time or even for cross-sectional data. The problem is that we cannot safely determine when someone has left school for the last time until many years after the event. Only if it is legitimate to assume that those not currently in school have finished school can the retrospective approach be applied to prospective or cross-sectional data. However, there is substantial evidence that young people do leave school and then return; hence this assumption seems unwarranted.[1] In general this measurement strategy appears to be based on the notion that life course transitions are clearly defined and irreversible steps. For example, youth labor market research typically limits the analysis to out-of-school youth, implicitly assuming that young men's lives are neatly divided up into a school-only period followed by a work-only period (e.g., Freeman and Wise 1982). In addition, much of the life course literature on sequencing norms implicitly or explicitly assumes clearly demarcated transitions. More recent research, however, increasingly recognizes that the transition to adult work roles is a lengthy, complicated, and sometimes faltering process (Rindfuss, Swicegood, and Rosenfeld 1987). Young men tend to have unstable work attachments, they are often involved in a considerable amount of job search and experimentation (Osterman 1980), they frequently interrupt schooling (Bumpass and Call 1989), and increasingly combine schooling with temporary work (Greenberger 1983; Mare, Winship, and Kubitschek 1984). In sum, it is difficult to apply retrospectively-based definitions of life course transitions to panel data or cross-sectional data without making unjustified assumptions because one does not have the benefit of foreknowledge and, even if one could peek ahead (as might be possible in a long-running panel study) this could give a distorted picture of the nature of the decision-making options actually faced by the participants at the times they made fateful choices.

Rather than trying to emulate a definition more suitable to retrospective data gathering, it might instead be preferable to exploit the richness of panel and cross-sectional data to observe transition processes while they are occurring. In this way, we could empirically determine, rather than theoretically assume, how distinct and irreversible such transitions are by studying them over the course of young people's careers, how sensitive they are to exogenous socioeconomic forces, and whether and how one type of transition may affect another. We contribute to this endeavor by developing a typology of life-cycle jobs that focuses particularly on young men's transition to adult work careers. Using the large sample sizes of the U.S. census public use samples we develop an occupational typology that utilizes only four variables: occupation, sometimes broken down by industry when occupational heterogeneity is a factor;[2] the age composition of workers in these occupational categories; and the proportions working part or full time. Because of its simplicity, the typology can easily be reconstructed on different censuses to see if it is sensitive to

changing labor market conditions. It can then be applied to any data set that includes census occupational categories, thereby including most major panel and cross-sectional data sets as well as the Current Population Surveys (CPS) and the censuses themselves. Hence, our typology should provide a valuable tool for the ongoing analysis of the nature of the transition to work, what affects it, and what its socioeconomic and demographic consequences are.

The life-cycle job typology developed here builds on the work of Osterman (1980) and others who have pointed out the rather messy nature of young men's transition to work.[3] This body of work not only emphasizes that youth, although primarily working-class youth, first pass through a "moratorium" period after leaving school but that they hold distinctive types of low-level casual jobs during this interval—jobs that are neither related to each other nor to those in a young man's future occupational career. We also believe that job type varies over the career cycle as well as other employment characteristics such as earnings and employment stability. Early jobs are often not part of an institutionalized career path but instead represent a particular type of "stopgap job"—a job which is often dominated by workers who, for life-cycle related reasons, have marginal labor market and job attachments. The youth in these jobs are frequently combining employment with school attendance and may, depending on the circumstances, continue in these jobs for a period after leaving school or between schooling spells. Moreover, because they are viewed in life-cycle terms, the low socioeconomic status of most youthful stopgap jobs is unlikely to label the individual worker. Instead, such jobs are frequently considered a legitimate career discontinuity because they are interpreted as a temporary expedient by both the worker and those who subsequently learn of his employment history.

There are several reasons why we think an occupational typology provides an important contribution to the analysis of the career-launching process and to the understanding of factors affecting the socioeconomic status of young men early in their career cycle. First, there is the conviction that stopgap jobs are a real but insufficiently documented phenomenon and that working in them is often taken as a sign of career "immaturity." The classic example of such a job used to be the newsboy, but many others exist and several of these have been emerging or growing in the postwar era (e.g., fast-food workers, retail salesclerks, waiters, gas-station attendants). While many studies have examined the peculiarities, habits, and cultures of specific occupational groups, these have mostly focused on professional and crafts occupations, and not on what we call stopgap jobs. Our occupational approach is also important because it implies a link between the transition to adulthood on the one hand, and the structure of the labor market on the other. If employment in stopgap jobs is pervasive among young men, the labor market partly reflects the structure of individual careers as well as the more purely demand factors based on the

economic organization of the market (as is sometimes assumed in dual labor market research, for example). Hence, the age composition of occupations, one of our main criterion for defining stopgap jobs, may provide information about the nature and functioning of labor markets that longitudinal analyses of earnings and employment do not offer (Kaufman and Spilerman 1982). The stopgap concept should also provide insights into the mechanisms via which macro-level economic trends in a society can affect individual-level behavior such as marriage timing. Moreover, if current occupation provides a useful indicator of career-cycle stage, research is still possible even when longitudinal data are sketchy, thus broadening the historical reach of career-cycle analysis.

After discussing the conceptualization and measurement of the life-cycle job typology, we evaluate the typology by addressing the following questions: (a) Is there empirical evidence that the life-cycle jobs we define actually do describe career-cycle patterns? (b) Does stopgap employment channel young men into a narrow low-level career trajectory, operating somewhat like secondary labor market jobs are supposed to? (c) How do life-cycle and human capital characteristics affect employment in stopgap jobs? (d) Are the pattern and individual determinants of stopgap employment similar for blacks and whites? (e) How has life-cycle employment changed between 1970 and 1980? We focus on black and non-Hispanic white males between the ages of 16 and 34.[4] Because our main task is to introduce and evaluate a new typology, our analyses are exploratory. In later work, we will employ the typology in a more theoretical fashion by examining effects of life-cycle employment on demographic transitions during the life course.

DEVELOPMENT OF THE LIFE-CYCLE JOB TYPOLOGY

Conceptualization

Rather than viewing the characteristics of those in stopgap employment as solely representing the nature of either labor supply or labor demand we see them as an amalgam of the two. The idea behind youthful stopgap jobs is that they partly represent the conjunction between the desires of employers and employees for employment flexibility and/or limited commitment. On the one hand, such jobs provide young men with the opportunity to earn money when they are in school, when they are not ready to make strong lifetime work commitments, or when they are unable to find attractive jobs requiring such commitments (Osterman 1980; Kaufman and Spilerman 1982). Youth are also a labor market segment that is often willing to work for low wages since many still have part or most of their living expenses subsidized by parents. In essence, these are the jobs that appeal to young people in transit, not to those ready to take on adult family responsibilities. On the other hand, youthful stopgap

jobs also provide increased flexibility, limited commitment, and low costs for employers. The young represent a cheap and highly elastic labor supply, making possible the rapid expansion or contraction of a firm's work force in response to short-term needs. Part-time work also facilitates more flexible work schedules, thereby reducing or even eliminating the necessity of paying expensive overtime wages (though probably raising supervisory costs). Moreover, because of their temporary nature and their appeal to youth, stopgap jobs can still attract workers despite low wages and do not need to offer many promotion opportunities or expensive benefit packages. Finally, the employer may be able to get higher quality—though perhaps more undependable—workers than he could otherwise obtain because young people in high school and college are often willing to work at relatively low-wage jobs in exchange for flexibility in the hours worked (Lazear 1977).

In short, by virtue of the distinctive characteristics of the particular labor market segment from which youthful stopgap workers are drawn, the jobs themselves have been able to develop in a way that makes them unattractive to other types of workers for whom they represent less meaningful employment opportunities. However, the ability of employers to attract stopgap workers whose ultimate occupational destination is at a higher skill level can mean that poorly-educated youth are placed in a weak competitive position, even for these low-level jobs. In a sense, the youthful stopgap job concept has strong similarities to the historically traditional notion of "female" jobs in a sex-segregated labor market—that is, jobs that were considered suitable for young women before they married and settled down to raising a family (Oppenheimer 1970). In both cases, employers increasingly limited themselves to a distinctive segment of the labor pool defined more in life-cycle terms rather than by skill level. As a consequence, such jobs developed characteristics that met certain needs of that labor pool and at a "price" that enough of those workers were willing to pay (for a while at least). Flexibility in working hours and shorter-term work commitments is what was offered; the price of this was low wages and few long-range advancement prospects. The result is that such jobs fail to represent attractive or even viable career opportunities to other worker groups (Oppenheimer 1970). This may be a major reason why the sex composition of traditionally female occupations does not appear to have changed markedly despite the fact that a fairly substantial number of women have been moving into traditionally male occupations (Beller 1985; Bianchi and Rytina 1986).

Operationalization

It would be relatively easy to compose a list of youthful stopgap jobs. A historical example is the slowly disappearing newsboy; its modern equivalent

is the counter worker at MacDonald's. Since such a subjective approach is neither systematic nor easily defensible, we develop a set of simple operational rules to define life-cycle jobs. While some have treated these moratorium-period jobs as essentially "youth" jobs (e.g., Folk 1968), Osterman (1980) argues that they are more appropriately thought of as secondary labor market (SLM) jobs because employment in them is not limited to youth but includes women and minorities as well. Moreover, "youth" jobs exhibit many other characteristics of SLM jobs such as low pay, little on-the-job training, and few opportunities for advancement. Hence, Osterman's approach was to develop a definition of SLM jobs as a means of studying youth labor market behavior. Our view is that this measurement strategy needlessly complicates the analysis of youthful stopgap employment. For one thing, there is considerable controversy about just what are or are not SLM jobs. As a consequence, there is little consensus on how to define a SLM job, and the indicators are usually complex. An additional weakness of such typologies is that they make it difficult to study the hypothesized consequences of SLM employment because several of these have already been incorporated into the construction of the typology itself—for example, low pay, poor advancement opportunities, high turnover, and so forth. Moreover, not all SLM jobs need be major employers of youth; as a result, SLM jobs are likely to be heterogeneous with respect to age and hence provide only rough indicators of the jobs that provide flexible employment opportunities for youth.

Rather than taking the SLM route, we have adopted a more direct and narrowly focused strategy. Our approach builds on Kaufman and Spilerman's (1982) innovative work on the age composition of occupations. Kaufman and Spilerman argue that the existence of certain career lines is reflected in the age composition of occupations, and subsequently develop a variety of occupational age profiles as an instrument for probing labor market structure. Notwithstanding the importance of their contribution, the "youthful" occupations Kaufman and Spilerman introduce are not immediately useful for our present purpose because their sample was limited to males who were working full time, defined as those employed 40 or more weeks in 1969, with annual earnings of at least $2,000 (1982, p. 834). For identifying occupations that rely on young workers with short-term work goals or marginal labor market attachments, this is not an entirely appropriate sample. Moreover, relying solely on age composition for their classification system led them to characterize occupations where the young are over-represented as either career-entry jobs or rapidly growing occupations, thereby failing to separate out youthful stopgap types of jobs from this group. To avoid this problem, we have supplemented the age composition of the occupation as an indicator of youthful stopgap employment by an additional criterion which should indicate the "casual" nature of these jobs: the relative frequency of part-time

employment in an occupation. Our rationale is that part-time work is rare in jobs offering the beginning of a stable occupational career; hence its prevalence should provide a useful criterion for distinguishing entry-level from stopgap jobs. We also considered using the number of weeks worked, a potentially important indicator of temporary employment, but rejected this because seasonal employment is prevalent in industries that provide stable careers—for example, many occupations in durable-goods manufacturing and construction industries.[5]

In sum, we have chosen to define youthful stopgap jobs in a rather narrow sense. First, we use age structure to measure the life-cycle aspect of stopgap jobs and, second, we use the prevalence of part-time employment as an indicator of the more casual nature of these jobs. We also expect such jobs to exhibit many characteristics of SLM jobs—poor pay, few advancement opportunities, high turnover—but we prefer to discover these characteristics on the basis of an empirical analysis rather than building them into the definition of the typology itself.

To get down to specifics, using detailed occupation as the unit of analysis, the typology is based on the characteristics and behaviors of the males, aged 16 to 74 years old, who were employed in each occupation. Information is obtained from the one percent micro samples of the 1970 and 1980 U.S. censuses respectively. Because changes will occur in the nature of labor demand, due to changes in the industrial-occupational structure, and because of changes in the size and characteristics of the supply of labor, we developed the typology for each census separately.[6] The first step was to assess what percentage of currently employed workers in each occupation were younger than 25. If this number was above the percentage of all workers who were below age 25 (17 percent in 1970 and 20 percent in 1980), the occupation is classified as "youthful." Second, we assessed what percentage of young workers, in this case those aged 16-29,[7] in an occupation worked less than 35 hours in the week preceding the census. If this number was above the percentage of all employed youth in this age group who were working part time (25 percent in 1970 and 23 percent in 1980), we classified the job as "part time." If an occupation was both "part time" and "youthful," we classified it as "stopgap." If an occupation was "youthful" but not "part time" we considered it a "career-entry" job, keeping in mind that we can only distinguish career-entry positions that are occupationally differentiated. The remaining occupations were classified as "career" jobs.[8] The net result of this classification schema in 1970 was 197 career jobs, 74 career entry, and 69 stopgap jobs. In 1980, there were 215 career jobs, 88 career-entry jobs, and 62 stopgap jobs.[9]

While several additional variables could have been used in the definition of life-cycle jobs (e.g., attitudes about work, earning profiles, hiring practices), not all of these are available in census data and we preferred to keep the

typology as simple as possible, at the risk of introducing some heterogeneity into our categories. A simple approach also makes it possible to define life-cycle jobs using historical censuses with less detailed information on the socioeconomic characteristics of occupations. In addition, the simplicity of our strategy reduces the disruptive effect of changes in the occupational/industrial classification systems since it is not essential to try to achieve detailed inter-census comparability in the classification system before setting up the typology. One can just start afresh and create the typology under the new classification system. In fact, despite the major 1970-1980 changes in the occupational classification systems themselves, we found very little difference in the results when the 1980 typology was created using the 1970 as opposed to the 1980 classification system.

The Nature of Stopgap Occupations

Is the utilization of objective criteria to define stopgap jobs roughly equivalent to what we would obtain by a more subjective approach? In other words, does the typology have face validity? Table 1 provides examples of occupations objectively classified as stopgap in 1970. There are more stopgap jobs than those listed in Table 1, but just these 40 occupations employed over 80 percent of all employed stopgap workers aged 16-34 years old. Gas-station attendants, mailroom workers, stockclerks, messengers, car washers, dishwashers, waiters and food-counter workers, to name a few, all seem intuitively reasonable examples of youthful stopgap jobs. As with most typologies, there is heterogeneity within some of the occupations listed and hence some measurement error. Musicians are a good example. While many musicians are only temporarily involved in music—those in youthful rock bands, for example—a significant minority have a career in music. Worker heterogeneity within some stopgap occupations is also to be expected, implying that there may be competition among groups of workers with highly different backgrounds and work goals for rather similar jobs. We elaborate on this issue when exploring racial differences in stopgap employment. Geographical heterogeneity may occur as well; but the question of whether jobs develop as youthful stopgap jobs in some geographical areas but not others is beyond the scope of our analysis.

Table 1 shows what proportion of all workers aged 16-74 were young men aged 16-24. Despite the relatively low age threshold required to qualify as a stopgap occupation (the young had to represent only 17 percent or more of the total employed in these jobs), these data indicate that a very substantial proportion of the workers in stopgap jobs were aged 16-24.[10] Hence, the typology is not very sensitive to the particular age criterion chosen. Some jobs were almost completely dominated by youth—busboys, dishwashers, library

Table 1. Employed Males Aged 16-24 as a Proportion of Those Aged 16-54 and 16-74 in Selected Stopgap Occupations: 1970

Selected Stopgap Occupations	*Those Aged 16-24 as a Percent of Those Who Were Aged:*	
	16-54	*16-74*
Recreation workers	44.4	38.8
Newsboys	81.2	73.4
Sales, clerks, retail sales	41.9	33.0
Cashiers	67.0	56.5
Counter clerks	42.8	32.8
File clerks	50.2	43.1
Library attendants	79.1	74.7
Mail handlers, except post office	54.0	43.7
Messengers and office boys	68.4	47.6
Office machine operators	41.7	37.3
Stock clerks, trade	59.7	51.9
Telephone operators	35.9	30.7
Clerks, n.e.c., retail trade	50.4	39.8
Clerks, n.e.c., professional services	57.1	47.8
Painters & paper hangers	15.6	11.6
Gas station attendant	67.2	59.8
Laundry and dry cleaning operatives	29.6	21.5
Miscellaneous operatives, except mfg.	35.4	30.1
Deliverymen	29.1	25.1
Parking attendants	50.5	39.0
Animal caretaker, except farm	49.8	41.0
Carpenters' helpers	49.2	42.1
Construction laborers	29.5	24.6
Garderners, private wage and self-emp.	38.7	27.3
Laborers, freight: except mfg.	35.6	30.8
Lumbermen	23.7	20.8
Stock handlers, except mfg.	80.0	76.0
Vehicle washers	53.8	47.6
Unspecified laborers, services	41.2	33.2
Unspecified laborers, other	48.9	37.0
Farm laborers, wage	39.6	30.6
Farm laborers unpaid family	77.8	67.3
Cleaners and maids	37.9	27.5
Janitors	30.6	19.8
Busboys	87.8	85.4
Cooks	47.5	40.0
Dishwashers	79.8	69.9
Waiters	52.2	44.4
Food counter & food service workers	72.8	63.0
Recreation and personal attendants	57.7	45.6
Total employed	20.6	16.8

attendants, and stock handlers, for example. Since many of these occupations might also provide stopgap job opportunities for those at the other end of their career cycle, the table also shows what proportion of men in the prime working years, those aged 16-54, were youths aged 16-24. Here the numerically important position of youths is even more pronounced. For example, the proportion of cashiers who were aged 16-24 rose from 56 percent of those aged 16-74 to 67 percent of those 16-54; similarly large increases were observed for counter clerks, file clerks, messengers, and a number of other occupations.

Although, young people have a major presence in almost all stopgap jobs and dominate many, it is also obvious that a substantial amount of age heterogeneity remains in a number of these occupations. Rather than posing a serious drawback for the typology, we think this situation makes it more interesting. By virtue of their low-skill requirements, minimum on-the-job training, and flexibility in the hours to be worked (or instability, depending on your perspective), stopgap jobs provide viable short-term options for young men in transit to a higher-level career trajectory, as we have been arguing. On the other hand, their low-skill requirements have made them the only kinds of jobs many less educated workers could traditionally hope to obtain, at least at the entry level. As a result, worker heterogeneity in the stopgap job market could foster the kind of worker competition that is less likely in most other skill-defined labor markets, a prospect we will return to later in this chapter. Hence it is not our intention to argue that the youthful stopgap job phenomenon is necessarily a "good" development—it can be useful for some, while having negative repercussions for others.

EVALUATION OF THE LIFE-CYCLE JOB TYPOLOGY

While our typology was created on the basis of data where *occupation* was the unit of analysis, in order to assess whether it captures a life-cycle phenomenon for young men, we now turn to an analysis of *individuals* who are in different life-cycle jobs, focusing on employed men, aged 16-34, an age range that should encompass the transition-to-work process. In 1970, 24 percent of whites in this age group and 37 percent of blacks were employed in stopgap occupations. In 1980, 23 percent of whites and 32 percent of blacks were so employed. The remainder of this chapter addresses the following issues: (a) the nature of stopgap occupations; (b) the life-cycle pattern of stopgap employment; (c) the occupational destinations of stopgap workers; (d) the effect of life-cycle and skill factors on stopgap employment; (e) racial differences in stopgap employment; and (f) 1970-1980 changes in stopgap employment patterns.

Socioeconomic Characteristics of Stopgap Jobs

Although socioeconomic characteristics did not enter the definition of stopgap jobs, given young men's lack of experience and the limited on-the-job training of short-term workers, we would expect to find most stopgap workers in lower level occupational categories. Table 2 confirms this: 75 percent of white stopgap workers are employed in blue-collar occupations, whereas the percentage is just 50 percent for career workers. Differences among blacks are somewhat smaller: 85 percent of stopgap workers were in blue-collar occupations, compared to 72 percent of black career workers. While white stopgap workers are more likely to be employed in white-collar stopgap occupations than blacks, this is also the case for career workers, showing that the relative socioeconomic difference between stopgap and career workers is about the same for blacks and whites. Within the white-collar group, stopgap employment was relatively most common in clerical and sales work while among blue-collar workers, stopgap employment was most common in service and laborer occupations. In fact, it is rather surprising what a small proportion of young "career" or even "career-entry" workers were to be found in laborer or service occupations compared to stopgap workers.

When looking at the detailed list of occupations, the types of jobs in the stopgap list bear some resemblance to the secondary labor market concept (Doeringer and Piore 1971).[11] After comparing our list with two lists of secondary labor market jobs, however, it appears that, although the overlap is substantial, many of our stopgap jobs are not located in the secondary labor market. Of the 43 occupations that Osterman assigned to the secondary labor market in 1960 (1974, p. 513), 34 are included in whole or in part in our list. These 34 occupations represent 48 percent of our 69 stopgap occupations. Of the 71 occupations that Rosenberg labeled as secondary (1980, p. 36), 45 are stopgap, representing 65 percent of our stopgap occupations. That the overlap is only partial lies in important conceptual differences between the two labor market perspectives. The dualist position is that the nature of secondary labor market jobs, and their relationship to other jobs, are mainly determined by the economic organization of firms and industries, that is, by the structure of labor demand. Moreover, since secondary jobs are not included in any institutionalized internal labor market, workers in them have no access to ladders of upward mobility. As a result, it is often argued that they are trapped in such labor markets. The life-cycle job concept acknowledges that the opportunity structure of the firm may represent the opportunities available to individuals while they remain in that firm.[12] However, job mobility is so common among the young, that instead of being trapped in such occupations, we believe they will have a high probability of leaving stopgap employment, a point Osterman (1980) made some time ago and which we certainly find to

Table 2. Occupational Distribution by Life-Cycle Job Type: Employed Non-Hispanic White and Black Males Aged 16-34, 1970

	Non-Hispanic Whites			*Blacks*		
Occupation	*Stopgap*	*Career Entry*	*Career*	*Stopgap*	*Career Entry*	*Career*
	(38,531)	(30,487)	(88,283)	(6,114)	(4,242)	(6,254)
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
White Collar	25.1	33.9	49.9	14.6	23.0	27.9
Professionals	3.2	21.1	21.7	1.6	9.0	9.8
Managers	0.0	0.0	14.0	0.0	0.0	5.9
Sales	11.9	0.0	7.8	4.5	0.0	2.6
Clerical	10.0	12.8	6.4	8.5	14.0	9.6
Blue Collar	74.8	66.0	50.2	85.4	76.9	72.1
Craftsmen	2.2	19.1	27.8	1.3	9.0	31.1
Operatives	20.5	35.1	15.5	19.8	47.4	32.0
Laborers	30.8	10.1	0.5	34.7	15.8	3.1
Farmers	0.0	0.0	2.4	0.0	0.0	.8
Protective Service	0.0	0.0	3.3	0.0	0.0	4.0
Other Service	21.3	1.7	0.7	29.6	4.7	1.1

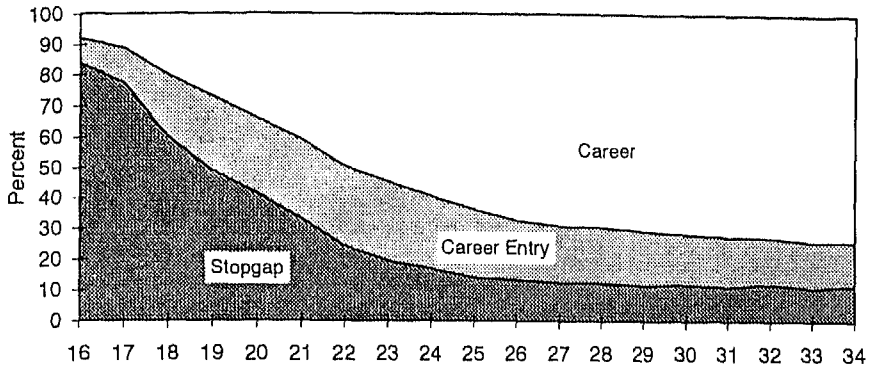
be the case in the data discussed here. Moreover, this is consistent with the notion that the late twentieth-century occupational structure partially reflects the structure of careers. If so, upward mobility may be just as much a function of changing occupation by changing employers as advancing within any particular firm.

Life-Cycle Job Mobility

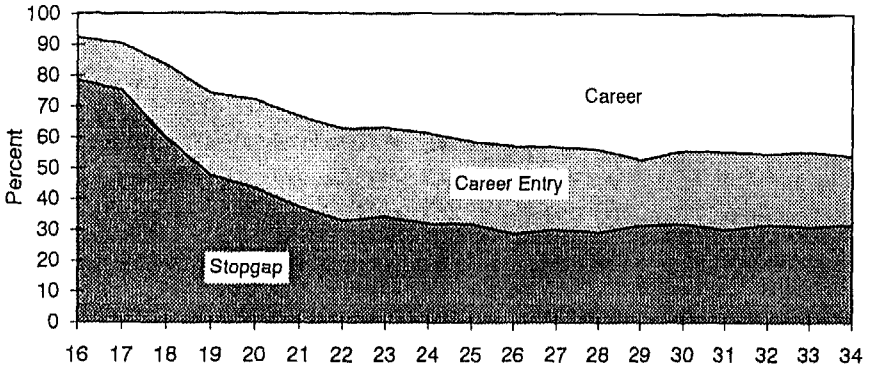
Does the empirical evidence support the basic premise of the typology—namely that those young people who do work tend to concentrate in stopgap jobs but move rapidly out of them as they mature? We explore this question in a variety of ways. First, we examine the cross-sectional age pattern of stopgap employment in 1970; then we will take advantage of the 1965 and 1970 occupational data available in the 1970 census (the only census to obtain such longitudinal data) to examine the extensiveness and age pattern of mobility out of stopgap jobs during that five-year period. Finally, we use the annual 1979-1990 panels of the NLSY to examine longitudinal patterns of stopgap employment from the ages of 16-31 for cohorts who were aged 14-22 at the first interview in 1979.[13]

We begin the analysis of mobility out of stopgap jobs by examining the cross-sectional relationship between age and stopgap employment. Using a density chart format, we examine the life-cycle job composition at each age in 1970 to determine the age pattern of stopgap employment. For blacks and non-Hispanic whites separately, Figure 1 shows how heavily concentrated young

a. Non-Hispanic Whites



a. Blacks



Age

Figure 1. Life-Cycle Job Distribution, by Age and Race, Civilian Employed Males, 1970 Census

employed males were in stopgap jobs and how this declined as we move from younger to older age groups, indicating how much young men moved to career and career-entry jobs as they matured. Among non-Hispanic whites, the percentage in stopgap employment rapidly declined from about 85 percent for sixteen year olds to a rather low floor of about 10 percent for men in their early thirties. For blacks, the percentages declined rapidly as well, but leveled off at a higher floor. For black males in their mid- and late-twenties, the level of stopgap employment was still about 30 percent. In sum, while these findings confirm that stopgap employment represents a clear life-cycle phenomenon, this appeared much less true for blacks than for whites in 1970.

It should be pointed out that our definition of stopgap jobs makes it unlikely that a substantial proportion of employed men older than age 30 will be found in such jobs. Since most young men in their late twenties and early thirties are employed, stopgap jobs (given their definition as occupations with a youthful age structure) cannot hold a very high percentage of workers in these "older" age groups, at least for whites who are in the majority. However, the substantial proportions of those in their late teens and early twenties in stopgap employment were not greatly affected by our definition of stopgap. Even though our age threshold in the definition of stopgap was that an occupation must only have *17* percent or more of its workers in the 16-24 age group to qualify for inclusion in the stopgap group, we saw in Table 1 that most stopgap occupations actually had considerably higher proportions in this age group; hence, that empirical finding was not built into the definition. High proportions of younger males would only be found in stopgap jobs if the size of the stopgap group itself were quite large and this possibility is also not a function of the definition; if the aggregate size of the stopgap group is small, it will not account for much of youth employment no matter what threshold level is set. Nevertheless we observed extremely high proportions of all employed young males in such jobs, corresponding to a fairly substantial stopgap segment. In short, we argue that cross-sectional age patterns of stopgap employment reveal the major importance of such jobs as sources of employment for young men and hence can provide valuable information on the speed with which the young move into more "mature" occupational careers.

The second way we evaluated the typology was to use the 1965-1970 occupational mobility data to compare mobility out of different life-cycle job types. If the typology represents a true life-cycle pattern, these five-year patterns of mobility should be consistent with the cross-sectional age patterns of stopgap employment: young men should have rapidly moved out of stopgap jobs between 1965 and 1970. Although mobility out of stopgap jobs is implied by our definition, the strength of these differences, as well as black-white differences therein, are informative. Retention rates for the three types of life-cycle jobs, as well as destination statuses for those leaving stopgap employment

Table 3. Career-Cycle Job Mobility Between 1965 and 1970, by Job Type in 1965, Age, and Race: Males 16-34 in 1970

	Whites		*Blacks*	
	16-21/ 21-26	*22-29/ 27-34*	*16-21/ 21-26*	*22-29/ 27-34*
Percentage remaining in 1965 job type				
Stopgap	27.6	41.5	43.2	57.8
Career entry	42.7	52.4	51.2	58.6
Career	69.4	86.0	56.6	73.9
Destination of those leaving stopgap jobs				
Career	50.9	70.7	32.5	48.6
Career entry	19.7	16.5	28.6	27.2
Armed forces	13.4	0.5	9.6	0.8
Unemployed	5.0	6.5	9.7	8.8
Not in labor force	11.0	5.7	19.6	14.7
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

are presented in Table 3. As with the synthetic cohort analysis, data on five-year job mobility show that stopgap employment represents a life-cycle phase for young men though, once again, more so for whites than for blacks. The retention rates for white career workers are more than twice as high as those for white stopgap workers, and most of those who leave stopgap jobs move to career or career-entry jobs, especially once past the very early period of youthful labor market instability and the time of military service. The retention rate of the career-entry group was lower than that of the career group, presumably reflecting the tendency for males to move on to career-types of jobs.

The mobility patterns are quite different for blacks. Like whites, blacks in stopgap jobs in 1965 were less likely to be found in such jobs in 1970 than men in career jobs in 1965, and the majority of those leaving stopgap jobs moved into career or career-entry employment. Nonetheless, blacks have a greater propensity to remain in stopgap employment than whites, combined with a somewhat lesser propensity to remain in career jobs. In addition, not only did a higher proportion of black stopgap job leavers become unemployed, but a substantially higher proportion left the labor force entirely. This may signify the poor competitive position of less educated young black males competing with more educated workers for the same low-skill jobs.

While the 1965-1970 occupational mobility data of the 1970 census provide some opportunity to explore the life-cycle nature of stopgap employment longitudinally, it would be preferable to actually follow a group of young men

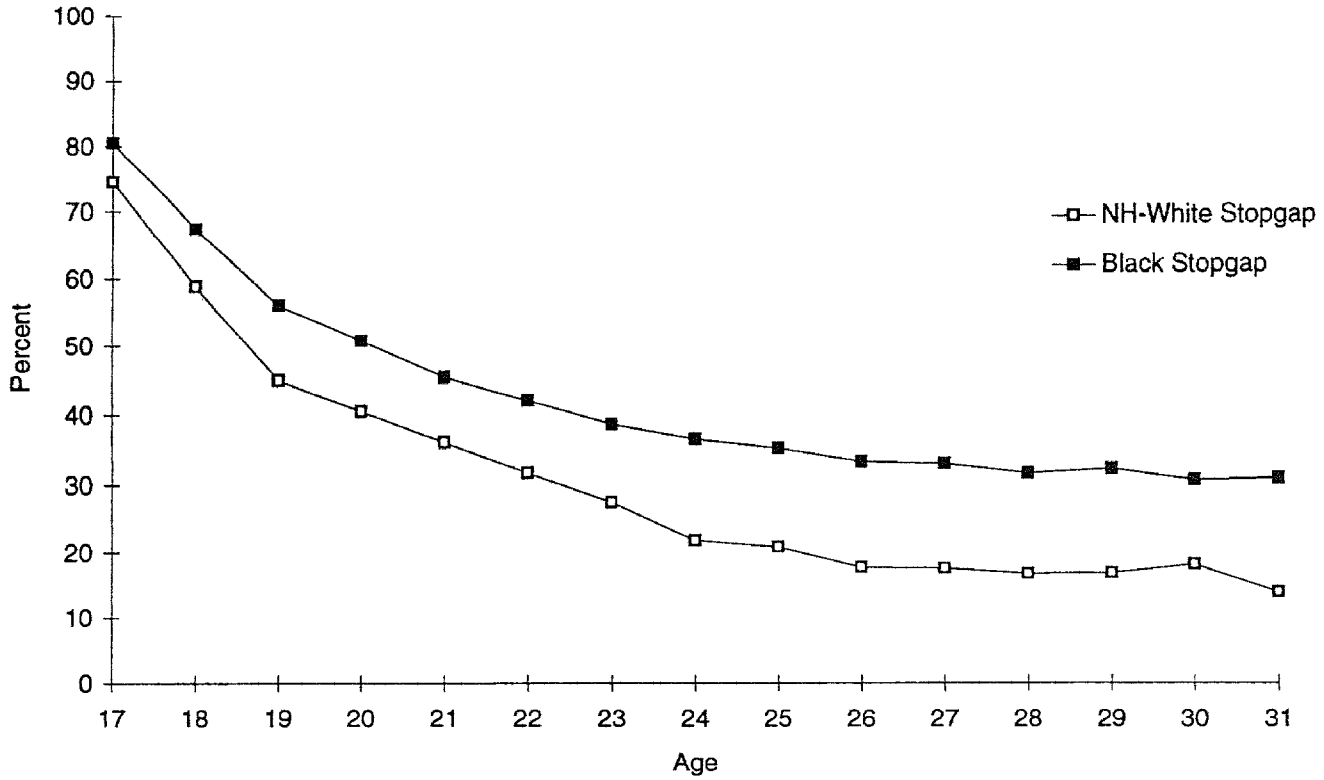


Figure 2. Percentage in Stopgap Jobs, by Age and Race: NLSY Civilian Employed Males, 1979-1990

over time to see if high proportions started their work careers in stopgap jobs but subsequently left them to go on to more "adult" occupational careers. It would also be desirable to examine the age pattern of stopgap employment on a different data set than was used to create the typology. Using longitudinal data from our current research on a related topic, we present some results bearing on this issue. The data are drawn from samples of young men from the *National Longitudinal Survey of Labor Market Experience, Youth Cohorts* [*NLSY*], first interviewed in 1979 when they were aged 14-22. We utilize all the yearly panels from 1979 to 1990. Figure 2 leaves out the data on the proportions in career and career-entry jobs and focuses just on the changes in the proportion of employed blacks and non-Hispanic whites in stopgap jobs as the cohorts matured during the 12 years of the panel.[14] What it reveals is a pattern that is remarkably similar to that observed in the 1970 cross-sectional data. For both racial groups stopgap employment is very high in the teens and drops rapidly thereafter. Here too, we see that the age pattern is much more pronounced for whites. While the proportion of whites who start out in stopgap employment is about the same as for blacks, by the early thirties a much smaller proportion of employed whites are still in stopgap jobs than blacks. In sum, both the pattern of life-cycle shifts in job type as well as the racial differences therein are not only observed in synthetic cohort data but in longitudinal data as well—both in the two points in time provided by the 1970 census and in the 12 years of experience exhibited by the NLSY cohorts.

Occupational Destinations of Stopgap Workers

If stopgap jobs are primarily a life-cycle phenomenon for most young men rather than representing an entry-level position on a career ladder, short though it may be, the future career path of youthful stopgap workers should be relatively unpredictable. In other words, young men should leave these jobs for a very wide array of destinations. We address this issue by, once again, using the census 1965-1970 mobility data to compare the diversity of occupational destinations among the three life-cycle job types. For each of the 324 occupations distinguished in 1965, we computed the standardized index of dispersion, D, which measures the extent to which those in a specific occupation in 1965 were dispersed among occupations in 1970. At one extreme, everyone in a particular 1965 job is found in only one occupation in 1970 (although not necessarily the same one as in 1965)($D = 0$); at the other extreme, they are spread as evenly throughout all existing occupations as sample size permits ($D = 1$). Grouping the resulting 324 indexes of dispersion by life-cycle job type, we then used an analysis of variance to test our hypothesis that the diversity of occupational destinations is greater among stopgap than career jobs. The analysis is limited to males who were under 35 in 1970 and who

reported an occupation at both dates. Because this is a young sample, a substantial proportion were in stopgap or career-entry jobs in 1965 and hence were highly mobile. However, for whites, the average dispersion for stopgap occupations (.89) is much higher than for career occupations (.67) and somewhat higher than for career-entry occupations as well (.83). Blacks exhibited less occupational dispersion, however; for them, the average dispersion for stopgap, career, and career-entry occupations was .65, .65, and .51 respectively. The analysis of variance for the 324 occupations indicates that between-group differences are statistically significant ($F = 64.1$, $p < .01$ for whites and 10.2, $p < .01$ for blacks).

While stopgap employment does not launch young males onto a rather narrow career trajectory, were stopgap workers nevertheless more likely to end up in low-status jobs? To answer this question, we regressed the natural log of the SEI of young men's 1970 occupation on their 1965 job type (dichotomized), using as controls the natural log of the SEI of the 1965 job, educational attainment, age, and age squared. The estimated coefficients for whites and blacks respectively are as follows (*$p < .01$):

Whites

$$\ln SEI_{70} = .933^* + .618^*\ln SEI_{65} + .093^*STOPGAP_{65} + .052^*EDUC - .014\ AGE + .000\ AGE^2$$

Blacks

$$\ln SEI_{70} = .232 + .682^*\ln SEI_{65} + .020^*STOPGAP_{65} + .030^*EDUC + .029\ AGE - .000\ AGE^2$$

The results show that stopgap employment has only a small impact on the status of a man's occupation five years later. Moreover, the effect is positive rather than negative, for blacks as well as for whites. Holding constant age, education, and 1965 occupational status, stopgap workers in 1965 have jobs in 1970 with about nine percent and two percent higher SEI scores for whites and blacks respectively than career and career-entry workers. The lack of a negative coefficient indicates that stopgap employment, low level though it may be, does not in itself have a negative impact on future socioeconomic status. However, it would be unwise to conclude that stopgap employment per se has a *positive* effect, except insofar as it may subsidize more schooling. The small positive coefficients are also indicative of the selection into stopgap employment of those headed for higher-status jobs as their careers mature.[15] In any event, the findings from both the dispersion analysis and the regressions of the 1970 SEI support our view that stopgap employment is not, in itself, very informative about the nature of an individual's future career and does not channel young men into a low-status career trajectory, at least not in the short run.

Life-Cycle and Human Capital Factors

Stopgap jobs provide life-cycle job opportunities, but are also low-level jobs. On the supply side, the lower a young man's skill level, the more marginal his labor market position and the more likely he is to be found in stopgap employment. Unless additional training is achieved, this effect will persist over an individual's life course, though perhaps mitigated by work experience. Second, age-related factors that distract young people from paid employment or lower the priority of work in their lives, should also encourage stopgap employment. However, the impact of these factors will only be temporary in nature. In order to assess the extent to which stopgap employment is a life-cycle phenomenon, we must sort out the influence of skill factors vis-à-vis life-cycle factors. To do this, we conducted a logistic regression analysis to predict the log odds of employment in a stopgap job as opposed to career and career-entry jobs combined. To measure skill level, or labor quality, school years completed was used. In a young sample such as this, school years currently achieved reflect both age-related factors and skill potential. Many young men are still in school or only temporarily not in school, and for them, the low skill level is also temporary in nature. An indicator of an age-related factor that may affect stopgap employment is estimated "time out of school," where still attending school is one option. While time out of school is essentially a variant of the experience variable commonly used by labor economists, the unstable labor force attachment of many young men causes it to overstate work experience during the early adult years. Hence, this variable probably measures career maturity as much as work experience, especially for younger males with low educational attainment. The third variable—whether the individual worked the previous year—is an effort to measure recent work experience and/or the strength of an individual's labor market attachment. Interactions are used to indicate whether greater experience or maturity offset the expected high odds of stopgap employment among high school dropouts. If the poorly educated are trapped in such jobs, time out of school might have no effect on job type. If, on the other hand, experience compensates somewhat for low educational attainment—by providing opportunities for on-the-job training for instance—time out of school will mitigate the effect of low schooling levels.

Table 4 presents the logit parameters for the model described previously. The results show, first, that stopgap employment was most common among those who are still enrolled in school and declined the longer people had been out of school. In addition, the less educated were more likely to be in stopgap jobs than the better educated. The interaction between schooling and estimated time out of school is plausible as well. Experience and/or maturity (i.e., time out of school) did lead to reductions in stopgap employment for the less educated. To put it differently, low levels of education mattered less when

Table 4. Logit Analysis of the Determinants of Stopgap Employment, by Race: Employed Males Aged 16-34 in 1970

	Whites		*Blacks*	
Independent variable	β	e^B	β	e^B
Intercept	.394**		.138	
Years of schooling completed				
0-11	1.322**	3.75	1.199**	3.03
(12-15)				
16 +	-1.556**	.21	-1.460**	0.23
Time out of school				
(In school)				
Out < 1 year	-.272**	.76	0.86	1.09
Out 1-2 years	-.768**	.46	-.395**	.67
Out 3-4 years	-1.354**	.26	-.708**	.49
Out 5 + years	-1.813**	.16	-.675**	.51
Worked in 1969	-.502**	.60	-.460**	.63
Less than High School 4* time out of school				
(In school)				
Out < 1 year	-.235*	.79	-.553	.58
Out 1-2 years	-.462**	.63	-.194	.82
Out 3-4 years	-.388*	.68	-.253	.77
Out 5 + years	-.670**	.51	-.601**	.55
-2 Log Likelihood	142,445.9*		20,556.2**	
D.f.	157,289		16,598	

Note: * $p \leq .05$
** $p \leq .01$

people had more experience, suggesting that even though stopgap occupations have low socioeconomic status, high school dropouts are not trapped in such jobs as they get older, at least the cohorts represented in the 1970 census. When focusing on racial differences, Table 4 shows that the effects for blacks and whites were quite similar, despite the fact that the age pattern of stopgap employment was different for blacks. However, a greater length of time out of school did not lead to as great a reduction in stopgap employment for blacks as for whites.

Understanding the Race Difference in Stopgap Employment

Our earlier examination of the age patterns of stopgap employed showed that it was less of a life-cycle phenomenon for blacks, perhaps because some blacks are trapped in occupations that are only used as short-term jobs by otherwise comparable whites. To explore this issue, we conducted a logistic regression on the black-white pooled sample for three age groups separately (ages 14-19, 20-25, and 26-34). Two models were run for each age category. In Model A, race alone was the independent variable. Model B adds the main effects of the other independent variables. Table 5 reports the results of these regressions in the form of odds.

Table 5. Evaluating the Contribution of Schooling and Experience Variables to Race Differences in the Age Pattern of Stopgap Employment 1970

	Odds					
	16-19		*20-25*		*26-34*	
Independent variables	*A*	*B*	*A*	*B*	*A*	*B*
Years of schooling completed						
0-11 years		1.92**		1.47**		1.82**
(12-15 years)						
16 + years		.64		.32**		.33**
Time out of school						
In school		4.20**		3.47**		1.24**
Less than 1 year		1.52**		1.92**		
(1 + years)						
Worked in 1969		.82**		.60**		.37**
Black vs. white	.86**	1.04*	1.73**	1.74**	3.23**	2.52**
Likelihood ratio χ^2	36,143.5**	32,447.6**	63,465.5**	60,126.5**	69,831.2**	67,268.1**
D.f.	27,921	27,916	56,725	56,720	89,259	89,255

Notes: * $p < .05$
** $p < .01$
There were no cases of males, 26-34 who had been out of school less than one year.

Among teenagers, employed blacks were somewhat less likely to be stopgap workers than whites, as indicated by an odds ratio a little below unity (.86, Model A). This deviation from the overall racial difference is largely explained by the fact that blacks were less likely to be enrolled in school at this age (45 percent, versus 67 percent for whites). When this variable is included in the model, the higher propensity of blacks for stopgap employment reasserted itself (i.e., the odds ratio increases to 1.04 in Model B). Because the racial gap in completed schooling is small in this age group, education has little influence on the black/white difference in stopgap employment.

The lower levels of school attendance among blacks continue to depress stopgap employment rates during their early twenties. However, at this age, large racial differences in completed schooling emerge, and these differences tend to increase stopgap employment among blacks. (For example, blacks were twice as likely as whites not to have completed high school at this age.) Since the odds ratio of 1.73 in Model A does not change when education and enrollment are added to the model, this suggests that the compositional effect of blacks' lower school attendance was just offset by their lower educational attainment. A different pattern emerges for men in their late twenties and early thirties. Here the effect of school enrollment disappeared, probably because few blacks or whites were in school at this age (less than 5 percent). Hence, at this end stage of the transition period, the lower levels of schooling among

blacks (which tend to increase stopgap employment) were not compensated for by lower levels of enrollment (which would have decreased stopgap employment). The net result is that when covariates are added to the model, the racial difference in stopgap employment declined by about 22 percent (from 3.23 to 2.52).

In sum, schooling appears to have two opposing effects on stopgap employment. In the short run, it increases employment in such jobs because those attending school are more likely to work in stopgap jobs on an interim basis. More extended schooling therefore increases stopgap employment and extends it over a longer period in the teenage and early adult years. Once schooling is completed, however, the short-run factors encouraging stopgap employment disappear and the more enduring effects of whatever educational level is finally attained begin to have their long-run impact on job type. Hence, an important (though certainly not the only) reason why a higher proportion of blacks in their late twenties remained in stopgap jobs compared to whites, was because of their lower completed schooling. The higher schooling of whites encouraged stopgap jobs primarily when they were young.

Changes in Stopgap Employment between 1970 and 1980

Stopgap jobs are life-cycle jobs for most young men, especially for whites, but they can also be used as a fall-back strategy when economic conditions deteriorate, and it becomes more difficult to move into career-entry or career jobs. According to employment and earnings indicators, the labor market position of young men declined in the 1970s (Oppenheimer 1994). Similarly, there has been a decline in employment in manufacturing, particularly in durable goods production, whereas employment in the service sector has grown. Such a transformation of the occupational-industrial structure has reduced the number of stable, well-paying career-entry jobs available to young men below the college level and may have led to at least a temporary increase in employment in short-term jobs. To determine if this has been the case, we now compare our 1970 results with those of 1980. Since we view stopgap employment as a function of time-varying supply and demand factors, the life-cycle job typology was independently defined on the 1980 census data, although the same criteria were used as for the 1970 typology (the occupation's age composition and the prevalence of part-time employment among young workers).[16] Figure 3 presents the percentages in stopgap employment by race, age, and census year. Although the proportion of whites in stopgap jobs decreased slightly for teenagers, it increased for white males in their twenties, consistent with the view that the weakening labor market position of young men encouraged them to use stopgap jobs as a fall-back strategy.

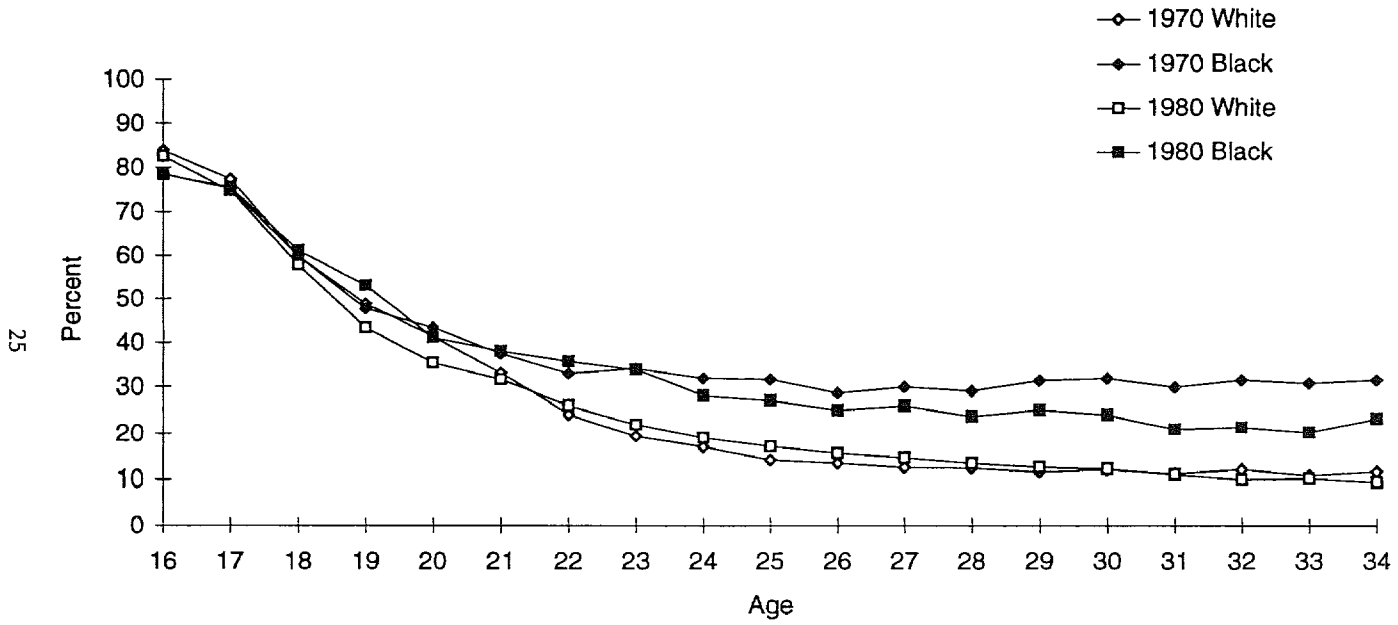


Figure 3. Percentage in Stopgap Jobs, by Age and Race: Civilian Employed Males, 1970 and 1980 Censuses

Changes for blacks, however, were quite different. The proportions of blacks in such jobs increased slightly for teenagers, consistent with schooling trends, but decreased substantially for males in their twenties and early thirties. Since trends for whites and blacks ran in opposite directions, there was some convergence in the proportions in stopgap jobs among men aged 23 and older. In other words, stopgap employment became more of a life-cycle phenomenon for blacks; for whites, it appears that they were using stopgap jobs as a fall-back strategy in a difficult job market. There is a convergence at the older ages, suggesting that this strategy might be temporary; however, synthetic cohort data are not an empirically reliable indicator of this.

To examine whether changes in the human capital variables—education, enrollment, and potential work experience—were responsible for these trends, we conducted logistic regressions for the pooled 1970-1980 data. Because changes are age- and race-specific, regressions were run for each age group and each race separately. To assess the impact of compositional change, we first ran a model with year alone, and subsequently assessed whether the year effect changed after introducing covariates. The covariates used are similar to those in Table 4, except that time out of school is reduced to a dichotomy and the interactions were omitted. The results, reported as beta coefficients are presented in Table 6.

Table 6. Total and Net Effects of Year on Stopgap Employment by Age and Race: Pooled 1970-1980 Logit Analysis on Employed Males Aged 16-34 Years Old

	β Coefficients			
	Whites		*Blacks*	
Age	*Total*	*Net*	*Total*	*Net*
16-17	-.131**	-.190**	.018	.198
18-19	-.181**	-.144**	.114	.078
20-21	-.162**	-.075**	-.042	-.019
22-23	.124**	.134**	.043	.099
24-25	.181**	.230**	-.199**	-.072
26-27	.174**	.275**	-.233**	-.070
28-29	.087**	.239**	-.305**	-.128
30-31	-.005	.206**	-.451**	-.256**
32-34	-.185**	.026	-.504**	-.281**

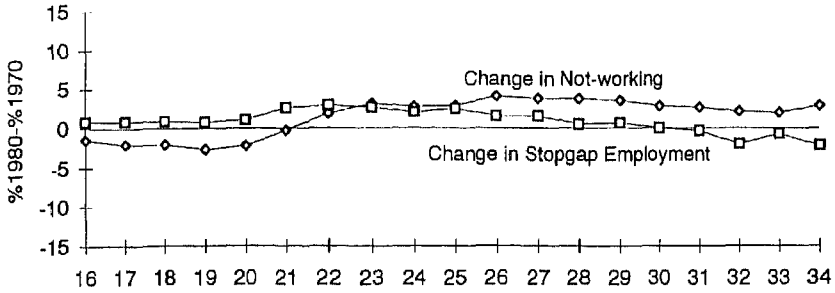
Notes: * $p \leq .05$
** $p \leq .01$
The coefficients in the first column under each race refer to regression equations where the only independent variable is year; the coefficients in the second columns include year, education, school enrollment, and work experience the previous year in the logit equation.

If there was an increase in whites using stopgap jobs as a fall-back strategy, then year should have had a positive effect on stopgap employment. This effect should decrease, however, once the effect of school enrollment is controlled for, however, because school attendance encourages stopgap rather than other types of employment. On the other hand, for those past the ages where school enrollment is common, the effect of year should increase once we control for offsetting factors such as educational attainment which rose for whites (as well as for blacks) between 1970 and 1980. This is the pattern that actually emerges. The negative effect of year for whites aged 18-19 and 20-21 is probably due to some declines in school enrollment, which is consistent with a decrease in the size of the negative coefficient once school enrollment is included in the equation. Overall, however, these results provide support for the hypothesis that the weakening labor market position of young whites enhanced stopgap employment and that this was only partially offset by small increases in their educational attainment.

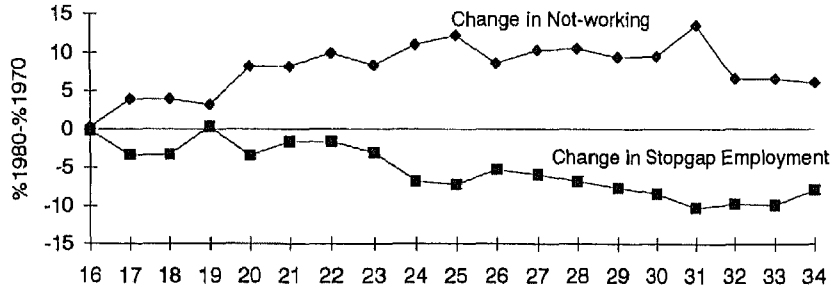
Among blacks, the effect of year was quite different. Despite the deterioration in young men's labor market position, year alone had a substantial negative effect on stopgap employment among black males past the school-leaving ages. However, much of this was due to rising educational attainment since, once schooling is included in the equation, the negative effect of year loses significance for those in the 24-29 age groups and is greatly reduced for those aged 30-34. In short, if there was a tendency for blacks, like whites, to fall back on stopgap jobs as labor market conditions worsened, this was more than offset by the sharp rise in black educational attainment, a change which increased their job opportunities in the better paying and more stable career and career-entry jobs. Hence, the table does not provide us with much information on whether and how the worsening labor market situation impacted young black men. However, one reason for this is that it only includes the employed; rising nonemployment is another major result of a deteriorating economic situation and it is here that a major black response is observable (Oppenheimer 1994). To briefly explore these issues, we present 1970-1980 age-specific changes in overall and stopgap employment for blacks and whites separately in Figure 4.

For whites, from age 22 to age 30, there were increases in both the proportion of the civilian population not employed and the proportion of the employed in stopgap jobs. After age 30, the proportions not employed decreased while there remains a small increase in stopgap employment. In general, the two trends are consistent with the view that declining job opportunities promote both nonemployment and stopgap employment. For blacks, a different pattern emerges. While stopgap employment decreased for blacks, especially for those aged 23 and over, Figure 4 also shows that the proportions not employed rose dramatically for those aged 17 and older, particularly for men in their twenties.

a. Non-Hispanic White Males



b. Blacks



Note: 1970-1980 changes in the percentages not employed and 1970-1980 changes in the percentage of employed in stopgap jobs

Figure 4. 1970-1980 Changes in Overall and Stopgap Employment, by Age and Race

This suggests that the less educated, for whom stopgap jobs were previously a major source of work, may have increasingly found themselves in a poor competitive position for these jobs. Moreover, the characteristics of such jobs may also be progressively tailored to the characteristics of a highly transient labor pool more interested in intermittent part-time employment than full-time stable jobs, albeit at a low level. Hence, along with the decline of well-paying jobs in manufacturing, lower-paying jobs may also becoming less of a fall-back strategy for the less educated. And since, a substantially higher proportion of blacks than whites were less educated this would help produce the much greater increase in nonemployment among blacks.

CONCLUSION

By developing and applying a life-cycle job typology, this chapter seeks to expand our understanding of the complexity of young men's career-launching process. We have shown that, for non-Hispanic whites, working in stopgap jobs is a life-cycle activity. It is most common among those still enrolled in school, those who have only recently completed their schooling, and among people with little recent work experience. As a consequence, teenage employment is primarily in stopgap jobs and the proportions in such jobs drops rapidly throughout the late teens and early twenties. However, it does not stabilize until men are in their mid-twenties implying that, on a cohort level at least, the transition to "adult" occupational attachments could be a relatively lengthy process. Meanwhile stopgap jobs are poor predictors of later job type and status, and hence are not very informative about the mature employment characteristics of young men. While all this confirms our basic idea about the nature and functioning of stopgap jobs, we also find that the pattern for blacks is somewhat different. A nontrivial minority of blacks seems to remain in occupations that are used as transit stations by whites, although the age patterns of blacks and whites did converge somewhat between 1970 and 1980. Despite these differences, however, the same types of factors which have an important role in fostering stopgap employment among whites also have this effect among blacks. Moreover, a major reason for the differences in black/white stopgap employment patterns was the lower educational attainment of blacks and, since their level of schooling has been rising, this has probably been an important factor in the convergence in the age patterns of stopgap employment between the two groups.

This examination of the life-cycle stopgap job phenomenon also has implications for the analysis of socioeconomic status using the social mobility approach of measuring it in terms of father's occupation as compared to son's first and current jobs. If young men's employment in stopgap jobs is not counted as their first "regular" full-time job, then we will be understating the

poor socioeconomic status of young men, especially in those groups that have a more difficult time making the transition to regular full-time employment in a career-entry job or career job. We are also less likely to detect temporal variations in the speed with which the transition to such jobs occurs and, if so, our analyses are less likely to discover variations in the socioeconomic status of young men in response to changing economic conditions. On the other hand, for young men whose stopgap employment is picked up as the first regular job after completing school, then the extent of their intra-generational mobility will be overstated in precisely those time periods when young men are experiencing the most difficulty in making an earlier transition. Moreover, the meaning of potential work experience as measured by the estimated number of years after finishing school also becomes more problematic if stopgap employment provides an important component of that experience.

The racial differences in stopgap employment which we have documented also underscore the importance of looking at competition for certain jobs among highly diverse groups. As several authors have pointed out, a major factor in the growing employment differentials between blacks and whites has been the rising employment of white teenage students (Mare, Winship, and Kubitschek 1984). Moreover, nonemployment has risen rapidly among young men with a high school education or less, particularly among blacks (Welch 1990). By helping to define one type of labor market—that structured by both age and skill level—the youthful stopgap job phenomenon may contribute to our understanding of this phenomenon. If white (or black) males from higher socioeconomic origins and with a relatively bright occupational future use a number of low-level jobs as youthful stopgap employment, they represent a higher status and more educated labor supply than would typically be drawn to these jobs as career or career-entry positions. What attracts youths to such employment is not the wages which are low, but the flexibility of working hours. If the youthful labor supply to stopgap jobs is large, as the evidence indicates, then it should provide competition to those young blacks (or whites) who are from lower socioeconomic backgrounds and who have achieved little schooling but who are looking for more stable employment. To the extent employers take advantage of the youth labor supply to such jobs and tailor the job characteristics accordingly, less skilled workers seeking more stable career or career-entry jobs (albeit at a low level) become increasingly noncompetitive and the jobs themselves cease to be viable career options. Our evidence on changes in stopgap and overall employment between 1970 and 1980 is consistent with this line of reasoning. Stopgap employment increased among young white males, but decreased for young black males, partly because they are improving their educational attainments but also because their overall employment levels have been decreasing considerably. In sum, it seems that somewhat more educated young whites may have used stopgap jobs as a fall-

back strategy in times of worsening economic conditions and that, as a result, less educated blacks males have been operating under a comparative disadvantage in the competition for stopgap jobs. The result may be no jobs at all for many young blacks and whites with little schooling. In addition, a major presence of workers with no long-run commitments to particular jobs or work organizations and who are easily replaceable tends to keep the wages, benefits, and working conditions in these jobs poor, not to mention the discouraging effect this has on building in career ladders. This tendency should also have been accentuated during the 1970s and 1980s by the declining real value of the minimum wage which would have made youthful stopgap jobs even less of a viable career option for low-skilled workers.

Another important task for future research is to examine how life-cycle employment affects other aspects of the transition to adulthood. We hypothesize that stopgap employment may lead to a postponement of other major transitions in the lives of young men, such as marriage, setting up an independent household, starting a family, and so on. Although such casual employment, while young, may not mark the person in a negative way during the later stages of his career, it nonetheless is indicative of a high degree of current uncertainty regarding a young man's ultimate occupational destination and may operate as a signal of career "immaturity." For example, uncertainty about characteristics that are considered important in the assortative mating process, as well as a perceived inability or unwillingness to settle down to a regular job, could have the result of impeding marriage formation (Oppenheimer 1988).[17] Hence stopgap employment may provide one mechanism that helps us understand how macro-level changes in a society, such as business cycle fluctuations or shifts in the industrial-occupational structure, can affect family behavior.

APPENDIX

Life-cycle Jobs: Stopgap and Career Entry, 1970

Occupation	*Occupation Code Number*	*Industry Code Number*
STOPGAP JOBS		
Professional & Technical workers		
Librarians, archivists	32,33	
Health workers, n.e.c	73,74,81,82, 84,85	
Recreation workers	101	
Teachers, except college	145	

(continued)

APPENDIX (*Continued*)

Athletes	180	
Musicians and composers	185	
Radio & TV announcers	193	
Sales workers		
Peddlers	264	
Newsboys	266	
Retail clerks (U)	283	
Salesmen, allocated	296	
Clerical workers		
Cashiers	310	
Counter clerks (U)	314	
Interviewers	320	
File clerks	325	
Library attendants	330	
Mail handlers, exc. post office	332	
Messengers (U)	333	
Office machine operators	341,342,344,350,355,391	
Receptionists	364	
Stock clerks, trade	381	507-699
Teachers aide	382	
Clerical, n.e.c.	394,395	
Retail trade		607-699
Professional services		828-899
Other		17-78,727-817
Craftsmen		
Motion picture projectionists (U)	505	
Painters & paper hangers	510,512	
Operatives		
Gas station attendants	623	
Produce graders and packers (U)	625	
Laundry & dry cleaning operatives (U)	630	
Miscellaneous operatives, except manufacturing	694,695	17-78,407-947
Operatives, allocated	696	
Busdrivers	703	
Deliverymen	705	
Parking attendants (U)	711	
Taxicap drivers & chaufferus	714	
Laborers		
Animal caretakers, except farm	740	
Carpenter's helpers	750	
Construction laborers	751	
Fishermen & oystermen	752	
Laborers, freight, except manufacturing	753	17-78, 407-947

APPENDIX

Occupation	*Occupation Code Number*	*Industry Code Number*
Gardener, private wage & salary (U)	755	
Gardener, self-employed, unpaid	755	
Lumbermen	761	
Stockhandlers, except manuf.	762	17-78,407-947
Vehicle washers	764	
Unspecified laborers	785	
Transport, commun., util.		407-499
and trade		507-699
Other (U)		17-78,707-947
Laborers, allocated	796	
Farm laborers, wage workers (U)	822	
Farm laborers, unpaid	823	
Service Workers		
Chambermaids and maids (U)	901	
Cleaners (U)	902	
Janitors (U)	903	
Bartenders	910	
Busboys	911	
Cooks	912	
Dishwashers	913	
Food-counter workers	914	
Waiters	915	
Food-service workers, n.e.c.	916	
Recreation & personal attendants	932,933	
Miscellaneous personal service	934	
Personal service, n.e.c.	941,942	
	945,952	
Housekeepers, exc. private household	950	
Ushers	953	
Service workers, allocated	976	
Private household workers (U)	980-986	
CAREER ENTRY JOBS		
Professional & technical occupations		
Computer programmers	003	
Therapists	076	
Clinical lab technicians	080	
Radiological technicians	083	
Kindergarten & elementary teachers	142,143	
Biological technicians	150	
Chemical technicians	151	
Draftsmen	152	
Engineering, math, & science technicians	156,162	
Surveyors	161	
Professional & technical, allocated	196	

(continued)

APPENDIX (*Continued*)

Clerical Occupations		
Bank tellers	301	
Billing clerks	303	
Bill collectors	313	
Meter readers	334	
Computer equipment and key punch operators	343,345	
shipping clerk	374	
Stock clerk, selected services	381	17-78,407-499,707-947
Clerical, n.e.c.	394,395	
Nondurable goods, mfg.		268-399
Finance, Insur, & real estate		707-719
Clerical, allocated	396	
Crafts		
Building trades apprentices, n.e.c.	411,416,511 521,523	
Carpet installers	420	
Printing trades apprentices	423,531	
Decorators & window dressers	425	
Electrician apprentices	431	
Engravers	435	
Machinist apprentices	462	
Mechanics, auto	473	
Mechanics, auto, apprentices	474	
Mechanics, apprentices, exc. auto	491	
Misc. craft apprentices	504,571,572	
Sheetmetal apprentices	536	
Telephone, linemen, installers, & repairmen	552,554	
Tool & die apprentices	562	
Operatives		
Assemblers, except aircraft	602	17-219,228-947
Bottling and canning operatives	604	
Chainmen and rodmen, surveyors	605	
Dry wall installers	615	
Dyers	620	
Graders, mfg.	624	
Metal platers	635	
Packers & wrappers, exc. meat	643	
Painters, mfg. articles	644	
Photographic process workers	645	
Riveters and fasteners	660	
Shoemaking machine operatives	664	
Spinners	672	
Textile operatives, n.e.c.	674	
Winding operatives, n.e.c.	681	
Machine operatives	690,692	
Durable, except transport equip.		107-209,239-267
Nondurable		268-399

APPENDIX

Occupation	*Occupation Code Number*	*Industry Code Number*
Nonmanufacturing		17-78,407-947
Miscellaneous operatives	694,695	
Transport.equipment		219-238
Durable, other		107-209,239-267
Nondurable		268-399
Fork life operatives	706	
Laborers		
Laborers, freight, mfg.	753	107-399
Stockhandlers, manufacturing	762	107-399
Warehousemen, n.e.c.	770	
Misc. laborers	780	
Manufacturing		107-399
Other		17-78,407-947
Unspecified laborers	785	
Durable goods mfg.		107-267
Chemical, petroleum		347-387
Other nondurable		268-339,388-399
Farm laborers, allocated	846	
Service workers		
Health aides and trainees	921-923	
Nursing aides, orderlies		925
Welfare service aids	954	

Note: ^{U} *U-shaped age distribution*

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NOTES

1. Moreover, there are causal direction problems in such a measurement approach which can affect retrospective as well as prospective studies. A young man may leave school without intending to return but his early experiences in the labor market (even in full-time jobs) may drive him back to school to improve his occupational prospects. In those cases, the nature of the first regular job or jobs may have led to more schooling, just the reverse of the causal direction posited by mobility researchers.

Or a young man may leave school with the intention of returning but meanwhile marry and find he can no longer afford to go back to school, especially if his wife is pregnant. In this case, final school-leaving age is a consequence of the age at marriage; the opposite of what is usually

hypothesized in the analysis of marriage formation. Hence the retrospective approach may distort our understanding of the nature of the decision-making process; hindsight evaluations are, by definition, reconstructed after the fact and these reconstruction may not accurately reflect the nature of the decision-making process while it is actually occurring.

2. This is commonly the case, for example, in the large census "n.e.c" (not elsewhere classified) or "unspecified" categories the census includes in its occupational classification systems.

3. See Chapter 2 of Osterman (1980) for a discussion of earlier work related to this question. See also Oppenheimer (1982, ch. 4).

4. Female workers were excluded from the occupational data because there is considerable evidence that men and women who appear to be working in the same job type actually are employed in sex-segregated jobs (Oppenheimer 1970; Bielby and Baron 1984). Moreover, until recently, much of women's employment might be characterized as stopgap in the life-cycle sense used here and there is little doubt that a lot of this persists. To have included women workers in the occupational analysis would have undoubtedly led to an overstatement of the number and type of jobs that provided youthful stopgap employment for young males.

5. Another drawback to using part-year work is that high numbers of such workers may be found in career-entry jobs because they are just beginning in these jobs but have not yet had the opportunity to work for a whole year. Despite these drawbacks, it should be noted that there is considerable overlap between the two characteristics. The Pearsonian correlation between the proportions of young men working less than 35 hours and the proportion working less than 40 weeks in 1969 was .85.

6. We use the terms "occupation" and "job" interchangeably. Occupation is not entirely appropriate, though, because several of the occupations in our analyses are further broken down by industry to more closely approximate the job concept.

7. The size of the age group was slightly enlarged to offset smaller sample sizes for a number of the occupational categories.

8. There may be some life-cycle stopgap jobs that primarily cater to the elderly (e.g. watchmen) but in which some youths interested in stopgap employment may also find work. These are, in part, occupations with the U-shaped age distributions that Kaufman and Spilerman distinguished. In order to make sure no high-level occupations were included where males only gradually retire, part-time work among the young was also employed as a criterion.

9. See the Appendix for a detailed list of the stopgap and career entry jobs for the 1970 census.

10. An exception to this was "painters and paper hangers." These two occupations fell into the stopgap category because the elderly and the young employed in these jobs were disproportionately part-timers.

11. There is also some superficial overlap with the distinction sometimes made between "good" and "bad" jobs. We believe that stopgap jobs may be bad for some, but not for those who are employed in them for life-cycle reasons. Later on, we also demonstrate that stopgap employment does not harm the person, at least not with respect to future status attainment.

12. Even here one needs to be cautious. Firms with a very broad base to their hierarchical structure may still provide more opportunities for advancement to workers over their life course than would be apparent from cross-sectional data. This can happen if the firm is rapidly expanding over time.

13. The NLSY refers to the National Longitudinal Surveys of Labor Market Experience, Youth Cohorts, first interviewed in 1979 when they were 14-22 and interviewed every year since (Center for Human Resources 1992).

14. The data for this figure are drawn from a person-year file of these youths that shows the characteristics of the young man in each person-year over the course of the 1979-1990 period, 12 interviews in all. However, because several (though not many) cohorts are represented in the NLSY, different cohorts passing through any given age will do so in different years; hence period effects, such as recessions, will be somewhat averaged out. Moreover, at each extreme, not all

cohorts can be represented. For example, we do not have information about the characteristics at ages 17-20 for those who were age 21 in 1979, the date of the first interview, and we do not yet know about the characteristics at age 30 of those who were only age 14 in 1979 since they had not reached that age by 1990.

15. This is supported by our finding, not reported in detail here, that nonworking teenagers still living at home in 1970 came from the poorest families while those in stopgap employment came from more prosperous households.

16. Because the Census Bureau introduced a new occupational classification system in 1980, the question arises whether it is possible to compare changes in stopgap employment between 1970 and 1980. To answer this question, we also examined these changes using the 1970 census and the March 1980 Current Population Survey (CPS). Because the 1980 CPS still used the old classification system, this comparison will not be distorted. After collapsing a certain number of the three-digit occupational codes in both data sets (warranted by the much smaller CPS sample size), we newly created the life-cycle job typology on the two data sets independently. We found that age-specific changes in stopgap employment in this comparison where very close to those reported in the text which compared the 1970 and 1980 censuses.

17. Our work in progress on young men's marriage formation, using the NLSY sample, shows that stopgap employment does indeed reduce the likelihood of marriage in any given year, even net of other important work-related factors such as the amount of time worked the previous year and income.

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