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THE LIFE COURSE PATTERNS OF CHICAGO AREA WOMEN:

A COHORT ANALYSIS OF THE SEQUENCING AND TIMING

OF RELATED ROLES THROUGH THE MIDDLE YEARS

by

Cheryl Allyn Miller

A Dissertation Submitted to the Faculty of the Graduate School

of Loyola University of Chicago in Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

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1981

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VITA

The author, Cheryl Allyn Miller, is a native of the Chicago Metro-
politan Area. She was born in that city on December 8, 1950.

Her elementary education was obtained in the public schools of
Lincolnwood, Illinois, a northern suburb of Chicago. She then attended
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In September, 1968 she entered the University of Illinois, Urbana;
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In January, 1973, after an extended trip overseas, she entered the
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Masters of Arts in the teaching of history in June, 1974. From 1974 to
1977 she taught social studies at Apollo Junior High School in Des
Plaines, Illinois.

In September, 1977 she was awarded a research assistantship in the
Department of Sociology, Loyola University of Chicago. That same acade-
mic year she received an appointment to the Center for the Comparative
Study of Social Roles, Loyola University as a research assistant. From
June, 1977 through September, 1981 she participated in the Midwest Coun-
cil for Social Research on Aging as a predoctoral fellow. The National

Science Foundation has awarded her a postdoctoral fellowship for the 1981-1982 academic year. She will continue to pursue research interests in adult development and the life course under the auspices of the Department of Social Relations, Johns Hopkins University.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Statement of the Research Problem

In the 1975 volume of the Annual Review of Sociology, Glen Elder

attempted the first systematic effort to organize the theoretical dev-

elopments and literature on age differentiation and the life course.

He showed, in that essay, a particular concern with current research on

the relationship between social change and the life course. In bring-

ing attention to this research he stated that:

> Social change in the life course is currently
> more a domain of rich possibilities than of
> research accomplishments and established
> knowledge (1975: 180)...It is perhaps most
> striking how little work has focused on this
> problem area, and, by implication how much
> theoretical and empirical work lies ahead
> (1975: 186).

The life course perspective has emerged as a major conceptual framework

in the analysis of adult development, aging and social change in the

six years since Elder wrote this review essay. Elder has also written

a series of conceptual and methodological articles that still provide

the most complete statement of the life course perspective (Elder, 1977;

Elder, 1978). As I will show later, sociologists have not been alone in

their adoption and use of the life course perspective. However they

have responded most avidly to the dictum that social scientists should

be involved in the study of social change. Elder's mandate for continu-

ed theoretical and empirical work on social change in the life course

remains a very real concern. Cherlin (1979), makes the point in a later

review essay on the life course, that the literature that has emerged over the past few years lacks of focus on problems. To his mind, there is a need to shift to substantive problems more grounded in social theory.

The research described here was undertaken as a response to these and other concerns within the area of sociology of age and the life course. My purpose was to investigate the changing patterns of paid work, marriage and childbearing for three contiguous birth cohorts of middle-aged urban American women who were between the ages of 25 and 54 in late 1977 and early 1978. The cohort-historical approach of the age stratification model permits the researcher to investigate social changes in successive cohorts by measuring the differential sequencing and timing of life events (Riley, 1978). Consequently, this analysis will center on the comparison of life course patterns across successive cohorts. In studying social change in the life course patterns of adult women, it is important to note that the life course of any particular cohort reflects its own distinctive historical experience. It is impossible to assess the effects of social change in life course patterns without comparative cohorts. It is equally important to note that important differences exist within cohorts as well as between cohorts. Social and historical events do not uniformly impinge on members of a cohort. Therefore, while this is primarily a study of intercohort variations and social change, there is no assumption as to the homogeneity of any single cohort.

Three preliminary research questions were developed from this view of life course change as a basic measure of social change: first, with respect to participation in paid work and family roles, what are the various life course patterns followed by a sample of urban American women in their middle years; second, have these life course patterns changed

over time; and third, what are the significant differences between birth cohorts that demonstrate the degree to which these life course patterns have changed over time? The tasks of the first two questions were to identify the prevalence of selected life course patterns during adulthood that could be associated with historical change. The answer to the third question lays out the groundwork for a second set of questions that provide cohort historical interpretations of research findings. If there are significant differences that are found between contiguous cohorts, what are some of the possible historical influences that produce those cohort differences? Are there specific historical conditions that can differentiate one birth cohort from the next?

The age stratification model, from which life course analysis was originally derived, identifies two articulating processes: allocation of roles in which people of given ages select or are assigned to certain roles, and socialization as a mechanism that allows individuals to perform roles at each stage of the life course. It is a goal of the age stratification model to specify possible historical influences and somehow relate historical change to cohort differences. This is in large part, accomplished by identifying the changing allocational needs and periods of socialization required by successive cohorts as they occupy a selected age stratum. Cohort timing of life events reflects how allocational needs of the society have shifted, how periods of socialization for performance of social roles has expanded or contracted, and how individuals behave, to some degree, as wilful actors. Therefore, the timing and sequencing of life course transitions are the measures used here to relate cohort differences to historical change and identify social change in the life course patterns of women.

Analysis of the life course experiences of women have been sparse, and especially those studies of women in their middle years. Studying the middle years is particularly problematic because of the wide range in the variation of patterns of aging associated with this stage of the life course. A typology of life course patterns has been created from the sequencing and timing of multiple roles and life course transitions in order to capture this potential variation in adult development. This attempt to create a typology grows out of the need to conceptualize the aging process as a multidimensional phenomenon, taking into account not only demographic factors, but sociocultural, historical, historical and material factors a well. An individual's life history is conceived as the product of multiple 'careers' or histories[1] through successive stages in which he or she simultaneously occupies several roles. The combination of educational, employment, marital and parenting histories all produce patterned variations, especially in adulthood. The typology designed for this analysis reflects the multiple career paths of a sample of women shown in the timing, duration, spacing and ordering of these four types of life events.

It is important for the discussion to follow to note the distinctions between life cycle, life span and life course in the literature on adulthood.   Traditionally, demographers have used the life cycle as a way of studying a closed population that is characterized by a continuous replacement process. Life cycle stages are examined through cohort analysis and are treated as social facts about cohorts in exploring population trends. Life span has been customarily used by developmental psychologists who are most interested in individual development and psychological variables such as achievement striving, ego-strength, interiority and value acqui-

sition. The life course approach, however, has been used most frequently by sociologists and family historians and does not involve the use of psychosocial factors as in the life span approach. The life course focuses more on the sequencing and timing of transitions between stages as well as on changes in the sequencing over time and among different groups (Clausen, 1972). The life course methodology involves not only the comparison of characteristics and composition of successive cohorts but also includes an examination of the social and historical context as well. It is this sensitivity to social-historical factors that is particular important for the research at hand and which dictates the use of the term life course over that of other conceptual terms.[2]

Study Design

A subset of life history variables from a larger study, titled "The Changing Commitments of Women to Work and Family Roles and Its Consequences for Social Security," provided the data base for this research. The study was conducted by the Center for the Comparative Study of Social Roles, Loyola University, and data collection and reduction were performed by the Survey Research Laboratory of the University of Illinois, Chicago Circle. The universe for this study consisted of all women aged 25 to 54 in households in the Chicago Consolidated area. They were 996 completed interviews which were weighted to a total of 1877 to represent the over-sampling of non-married respondents. For each respondent, reconstructed life histories were collected along four dimensions: Education, employment, marriage, and mothering. From these reconstructed life histories, a synthetic longitudinal data file was developed in order to perform cohort analysis.

Each separate life history was first analyzed for life course differ-

ences within a cohort and cohort differences across successive cohorts.
In addition, longitudinal experiences of the sample were charted and
role histories were developed for each role involvement (see Chapter IV).
From these analyses, a life course pattern typology was constructed
based on cumulative life experience in each role. The construction
of a typology of life course patterns has fully integrated the use of
life course transitions for cohorts and was developed in conjunction
with an exploratory research strategy. The analysis of this research
has focused on an appreciation of event prevalence as a prime source
of life course differentiation.

Overall, thirty possible patterns were identified when the
separate life histories, excluding education, were combined. The nine
modal patterns that make up the typology represent 85 per cent of the
cumulative life experiences of the women in the sample and are as
follows:

- Currently employed with a history of two employment periods or more, in first marriage, and one or more children

- Out of the labor force with a history of only one employment period, in first marriage, one or more children

- Out of the labor force with a history of two employment periods or more, in first marriage, one or more children

- Currently employed with a history of two employment periods or more, out of first marriage, one or more children

- Out of the labor force with a history of two employment periods or more, out of first marriage, one or more children

- Currently employed in first paid work period, never married, no children

- Currently employed in first paid work period, in first marriage, one or more children

- Currently employed in first paid work period, in first marriage, no children

● Currently employed in first paid work period, out of first
  marriage, one or more children

This initial typology was then analyzed for differences in the sequenc-

ing, timing, and duration of initial life course transitions across

successive cohorts. The prevalence of the different patterns within

each cohort and across each cohort were measured as a way of gauging

social change.

In order to respond to the problem of the effect of age, the

initial transition (first) into each role involvement was looked at

in order to create all possible sequences of employment, marriage

and mothering. Twenty possible sequences were identified, including

sequences that constituted only one transition and two transitions.

Of these twenty possible sequences, six modal sequences were selected

for analysis; they represented the experiences of 81 per cent of the

sample (N=1513). The most conventional sequence was first employment

period followed by first marriage followed by first child. Two varia-

tions on the pattern were also included in these six modal sequences:

labor force entry and marriage in the same year, then motherhood and

labor force entry, then marriage and motherhood in the same year.

The three remaining sequences included marriage followed by motherhood

follow by employment, employment only, and employment and then marriage

only.

Finally, the cumulative life experience typology and these modal

sequences were studied for their relationship to each other. From

that analysis, an expanded life course patterns typology was constructed

and studied for cohort differences and similarities. Three overall

worklife patterns were identified: a pattern of continuous employment,

a sequential pattern of work in which paid work roles and family roles
do not overlap but rather are sequenced without simultaneous involvement
for initial transitions, and a fluctuating pattern in which women
move back and forth between paid work and family roles, usually in
response to mothering responsibilities or marital dissolution.

Specific types within each pattern were also studied. Women
with continuous employment patterns varied by only whether they were
in there first marriage; many of the women with continuous employment
histories had never been married at the time of the interview. Women
with sequential worklives followed either a conventional pattern or
a delayed pattern. The former includes women who were employed prior
to marriage and mothering but had not returned to the labor force after
their movement into family roles. The latter group includes women who
married first, then had children, and only after an extended involvement
with family roles moved into the paid labor force. Two types were also
found among women with fluctuating worklife patterns: women who had
double-tracked worklives in which they re-entered the labor force
at some point after the birth of a child or after they completed
childbearing, and women who followed a sporadic worklife in which they
moved in a checkered fashion back and forth between paid work and family
roles. Another major differentiating feature of these last two
types is whether they experienced marital dissolution or not; the
former did not whereas the latter did.

Limitations of the Study

Many of the limitations of this study are derived from problems
associated with the effects of age. The younger women in the sample

have not lived out as much of their lives as the older women. Consequently, true comparisons of their behavior for selected age ranges cannot be made since, in many respects, their employment histories, or marital histories, or even mothering histories are incomplete. As previously mentioned, attempts to rectify this problem were accomplished through an analysis of first life course transitions into these selected roles. All three cohorts experienced their first employment period, first marriage and first child between their late teens and throughout their twenties. Their behavior for these transitions have been compared through cohort analysis.

Since this data was collected at one point in time, it qualifies as cross-sectional data. However, a subset of variables were constructed in order to create a synthetic longitudinal data set. From this longitudinal data set cohort tables were constructed and cohort analyis was performed. This data was compared with larger, national data collected and distributed by the Department of Labor (1980), and the matched findings between the two samples has given us greater faith in the reliability of our data.

Since this sample is made up of urban women from a single metropolitan area, the generalizability of the data is somewhat limited to other samples of this kind. A proportion of the respondents were born in other cities or lived out much of their lives in rural and non-metropolitan areas. However, at the time of the interview they were living in the Chicago Consolidated Area. Since reconstructed life histories include their role involvements from the age of sixteen and on, it is possible that their role histories include their behavior

for a period of time when they were not living in the Chicago

metropolitan area. However, nearly 40 per cent of the sample

lived in a large city (500,000 people or more) prior to the age of

eighteen. We have assumed that after this age, many of the respondents

moved to a larger city or the Chicago metropolitan area to seek

paid employment or get married. Consequently, much of their role

histories that we have charted are likely to have occurred while in

residence in an urban area.

CHAPTER I

Footnotes

[1]Throughout this dissertation, 'careers' and histories are
used interchangeably. However, for the sake of consistency, histories
has been used primarily in reference to constructed role typologies.

[2]Rossi (1980) herself essentially agrees with these distinctions.
However, she has chosen to use the term life-span since her research
on the middle years has evolved primarily from life-span developmental
psychology literature. Her analysis of the literature on adult
development has a different emphasis than that of Elder's (1975)·
because she has incorporated the life-span developmental literature
into her analysis of middle age. In contrast, Elder has focused
on the sociological and social psychological literature in the area;
and, in addition, is more interested in different explanations of
age differentiation in the life course.

CHAPTER II

WOMEN, ADULT DEVELOPMENT AND SOCIAL CHANGE: PAST

RESEARCH AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Review of the Literature: Contributions from Sociologists,

Demographers, Historians and Life-Span

Developmental Psychologists

Past Research: Strengths and Weaknesses

The literature relevant to a cohort-historical analysis of social
change or the life course patterns of women in their middle years is di-
verse and interdisciplinary. Contributions to the field come from demo-
graphers, historians, life-span developmental psychologists as well as
sociologists. Within all four disciplinary areas, theoretical and method-
ological concerns of a cohort-historical approach of the age stratifica-
tion model have received considerable attention. As a way of organizing
the relevant literature, the focus here will be on these separate disci-
plinary efforts, highlighting the major contributions from each as it re-
lates to the life course perspective in general and the age stratification
model in particular. The emphasis of this review will be on the contributions
each disciplinary perspective has made to the sociological analysis of age,
the study of life course transitions, and the processes of change for women
in their adult years. Of particular interest is the current state of re-
search on women in their middle years and the necessary directions for new
research.

The recent proliferation of books on adulthood in the trade press as
well as in the social and policy sciences (Goodman, 1978; Gould, 1978; Jacobs,

1979; Levinson, 1978; Rubin, 1979; Sheehy, 1977; Wax, 1979). indicates the current interest in this subject matter. The movement of large numbers of women into the labor force is in part responsible for this concern. Most of these studies have been cross-sectional investigations of the middle years, a method dictated by the prohibitive costs and demands of longitudinal studies.[1] Only a portion of this research is grounded in age stratification theory; but an increasing amount of literature has adopted a life course perspective with much cross-fertilization between disciplines --most of which has been directed at the development of theories on adulthood and adult development. The emphasis of this field has been to study discrete stages of the life course, particularly old age, reflecting the dominance of social gerontological research.

Social gerontologists, who have a substantial literature of their own, are rarely concerned with theories that cover other stages of the life-span. Instead, they have developed theories of aging which are focused on problems of psychological adjustment to the roles and status of the aged. Similarly, sociologists of age and aging, whether research oriented or applied, have not attempted to relate the situation of the aged to other age strata. In fact, the emphasis on psychological disposition, which is reflected in this research, has deflected attention away from the structural properties affecting the lives of the elderly (Marshall and Tindale, 1975). Only recently have people in the field started shifting their analysis of the aged to include a life course perspective, though not necessarily a concern with the variable of age itself. Nevertheless, the lack of a developed theoretical perspective has had the effect of generating atheoretical, although empirically impressive, studies on such topics as life satisfaction, marital happiness, and adjustment to retirement in old age.

In contrast to the social gerontologists who have developed theories solely to explain the status of the elderly, sociologists interested in age and the life course studies have adopted a framework which pays considerable attention to structural properties affecting all age strata, including the elderly. Their inquiries focus on the ways in which age status is related to social location, social roles, norms and other social structural features (Maddox, 1979; Rahav, 1979). The sociological literature on the changing nature of the age structure and its relationship to other structural changes demonstrates a greater attentiveness to theoretical analysis which is contrast with the largely descriptive studies by gerontologists. There are those researchers on middle age who have not directed their attention to theoretical concerns, but overall it appears that the current work on adulthood, particularly in life-span developmental psychology (Rossi, 1980), has attempted to move beyond the narrow scope of social gerontologists.

Social demographers, as well as sociologists of aging, have contributed significantly to the development of the age stratification model. Ryder's work (1965) on cohort analysis and social change has been a major building block in the development of Riley's (1976) age stratification model. The work of other social demographers has since expanded on the themes in Ryder's seminal study to focus on changing cross-sectional cohort patterns concerning individual aspects of women's family history. Specifically, there have been investigations into age at marriage, proportion marrying and divorcing, age at first birth, completed family size and the like (as examples see Glick and Norton, 1973; Rindfuss and Sweet, 1977; and Westoff, 1975). These demographic studies, however, do not link events for the same individual over her life course. These studies of

single demographic variables are limited because they lack the capacity to show how women combine several demographic patterns over time. To date, the two demographic variables that have received the most attention in relation to each other are female employment and fertility (Kupinski, 1977).

Some demographers have gone beyond studying variables such as marriage, divorce, and childbearing separately in an attempt to assess the cumulative significance of several variables over time. Most notable in this effort have been two separate studies by Uhlenberg (see 1969, 1974; also to be discussed in further detail in the research methodology chapter), work on the family life cycle by Glick and Parke (1965) and Glick (1977), and life cycle studies by Van Dusen and Sheldon (1976) and Taueber and Sweet (1976).

Another important area that social demographers have attended to is female labor force participation. The dramatic increase in women's labor force participation has generated considerable interest in how women combine employment and family roles. Most prevalent in this literature is the focused attention on the problems and conflicts of married women, especially mothers, and on factors that increase or decrease their labor force participation. Studies by Farkas (1977), Mott (1972), Sweet (1973), and Waite (1976) have provided useful information on the factors related to labor force participation and the increasing per cent of younger women who combine work and family roles. However, these studies examine only family stage and do not consider the relationship of family roles for different cohorts. Women are examined in terms of their employment history without regard for the age at which they occupy those stages. More seriously, these studies exclude women who are not currently married there-

by limiting the utility of their findings to the understanding of the full range of ways in which women combine employment and family roles at one point in time and over their life course. The choices women make to delay or avoid family roles, and their departure from family roles in later life are important aspects of the life course for many women that need further research.

Within sociology there has always been a traditional separation of the sociology of work and the sociology of the family. Both areas have proceeded along sex-differentiated lines. Historically the study of work has been synonymous with research on the male work place, the culture of the male workplace, the life style of workplace, and so on (Acker, 1978; Daniels, 1975). In effect, the study of paid employment has been the study of men. Women's occupational and employment experiences have been seriously neglected (Feldberg and Glenn, 1979). In a complementary fashion, the study of the family has emphasized the roles and responsibilities of women in relation to the family unit. The family literature of the 1960s and 1970s has focused on familial responses to working wives, conflicts of working mothers, and the effects of employment on the well being of children; what Feldberg and Glenn (1979) have labeled "family consequence" studies. Historically, strong social norms against paid work outside the home for wives, lack of societal provisions for employed mothers, and career expectations that will not accommodate employment interruptions, have directed attention to how women manage to combine work roles and family roles during their middle years (Norr, Miller and Lopata, 1978). In addition, the standard ideological support for a traditional division of labor in the family has limited the analysis of male family roles (Pleck, 1977). Until recently, women's unpaid labor, particularly their domestic

labor, has been seriously understudied (Amdsen, 1980; Berk, 1980; Glazer, 1980; Lopata, 1971; Oakley, 1974). This inability of social scientists to integrate unpaid work into their analyses of women's paid work and family roles, and conversely, their unwillingness to consider the ways in which domestic labor structures women's lives outside the household, present serious limitations to understanding the complexity of women's experiences in middle age (Glazer, 1980). The assumptions of traditional family sociology and role theory have limited the understanding of how women actively construct their multiple careers as mothers, wives, and workers throughout their lives. The virtue of the life course perspective is that it can "identify (these) conscious choices and priorities which individuals may have exercised in the timing of their life course transitions" (Hareven, 1980).

The expanding literature on the sociology of women's work has prompted an integration of family and occupational studies (see Berk, 1980; and Feinstein, 1979 for examples of edited volumes on research in this area). Joint consideration of women's paid work roles and family roles has been necessary to understand how women organize their time and manage their resources through adulthood. This literature on the intersection of women's paid and unpaid work is pertinent to a study of women's life course patterns insofar as it facilitates an understanding of the multiple careers women have through this stage of their lives.

A separate group of family sociologists, in collaboration with historians, have responded to the life course approach that include methods, an expansion of historical demography, and a revived interest in family history. Current empirical analyses using the life course perspective are dominated by historians while conceptual and theoretical developments

appear to be dominated by sociologists of age and the life course. Sociologists such as Boocock (1978), Foner (1978), Kanter (1978), Riley (1976) and Uhlenberg (1979) represent a growing group of researchers who are concerned with conceptualization and methodological alternatives in socio-historical research. Part of this focus on life course transitions is a reaction to the traditional, distinctly ahistorical family sociology of the 1950s. Family sociologists who have adopted a life course perspective have attempted to shift the direction of the subfield away from a Parsonian emphasis on structure and social stability to a concern with process and social change in family life. As Foner (1978) points out, the age stratification approach views both cohesion and conflict as inherent in family structure. The family is not only differentiated but also stratified by age. The life course view of the family as a group of individuals with multiple contingent careers has helped clarify and identify the effects of different life course stage for each family member. Parents and children are attuned to the personal significance of having reached a particular life stage; they are also aware of the "climate" and collective view of their own particular cohort. Since family members age, there is a constant shifting of each member from one life stage to the next. So the age structure of the family is constantly undergoing significant change as members make periodic adjustments to new roles typically associated with a life course transition.

Sociologists, more than historians, have focused on theories of social change in relation to the life course and family life. The recent edited volumes on the life course (Demos and Boocock, 1978; Hareven, 1978) demonstrate this concern with social change, but the tendency in these volumes has been to produce descriptive material on the timing of life

course events rather than to approach substantive problems (Cherlin, 1979).

Historians such as Chudacoff (1980), Hareven (1977, 1978), Modell, Fursten-

berg and Hershberg (1976), Modell, Furstenberg and Strong (1978) and Vinov-

skis (1977) have made major in-roads in the assembling and reconstructing

of fragments of data to provide knowledge on family form and functioning.

These social historians have applied a life course analysis to the study of

family history (see Elder, 1974, 1977, 1978; Foner, 1978; Hareven, 1974,

1978; Modell, et. al., 1976, 1978; and Uhlenberg, 1974, 1978; for an excel-

lent summary essay on recent trends in family history, Vinovskis, 1977).

These family history studies that have integrated the life course perspect-

ive and the study of social change are truly innovative in their utiliza-

tion of the age stratification model. And yet, as Modell, et. al., has

pointed out:

> Sociologists and historians have shown little taste for
> studying patterns of transition, relegating these problems
> to anthropologists or social psychologists instead. Remark-
> ably little work has been done of the scheduling of critical
> life events in our society, and on the existence of and
> changes in social timetables (1976: 7).

One group that has looked more closely at social timetables has been

life-span developmental psychologists. The studies of developmental psy-

chologists have been the most theoretically guided works on change in the

middle years (Rossi, 1980). Adult development research by developmental

psychologists has been influenced by two theoretical perspectives: the

normative-crises model as developed by Erikson (1950), Levingson (1978),

Valliant (1977) and others; and the timing-of-events model as advocated by

Neugarten (1968). The Eriksonian stages of adult development have been

use most often by those adherents of the normative crises model to study

mid-life as a stage of the life span in which crises are considered normal

as individuals experience personal change and self-reevaluation. The focus of this literature has been not only to study the experiences of men in mid-life but also to study the individual solely apart from the selected key figures in his life. This "psychology of crises" approach is different than the "psychology of timing" approach (Rossi, 1980) in that the latter does not view mid-life as a period of crisis but rather as a period of self-redefinition based on perceptions of age norms, age constraints, and certain age associated statuses. Chronological age has less meaning in this model of adult development if only because during middle age major life events occur at varied and staggered ages. In fact, this position on the part of timing-of-events psychologists regarding chronological age has worked against the emergence of research that is designed to investigate the locational properties of age in social relationships or in relation to given psychological states.

Rationale for a Study of Life Course Patterns of Women in Their Middle Years

The blending of these different disciplinary efforts has done much to spur the growth and development of a life course perspective on adult development. Whichever disciplinary emphasis these life course scholars are using, they are attempting to historically ground these events in an individual's life course, to incorporate ideologies and social institutions into their models, and to develop theories of social change. Nevertheless, specific attention to the life course patterns and the nature of social change as it relates to contemporary American women presents a gap in knowledge of this area. No longitudinal studies of cohort changes in employment and family roles for women over the life course currently exist. Instead, studies present detailed pictures of women's _family_ role involve-

ments over the life course or of their changing employment roles at dif-
ferent stages of their childbearing and childrearing histories. Yet
questions raised by the life course perspective, and more specifically the
cohort-historical approach of the age stratification model, about historical
conditions that separate and unite cohorts of women call for specific
specific studies on these conditions and about age-related behavior to
uncover important changes over the long term. Given the lack of empirical
studies on these processes and their historical variability, such research
can help to reveal the nature of personal and social change in women's
lives.Borrowing from demographers in particular for much of the metho-
dology and content, but also from family historians for operationalization
of selected concepts, this sociological study of women's life course
patterns will explore the various temporal dimensions associated with age.
Changing locational properties that are derived from age for women with
multiple role involvements in mid-life will point up to the increased
heterogeneity in life course patterns as well as reflect the changing life
histories of American women.

The direction of this study is based on an exploratory analysis of
the experiences of a sample of urban American women in mid-life. An over-
view of the literature has revealed some serious gaps in the content and
methodology of life course analysis and age stratification research. For
the next section, I will present a detailed analysis of the age stratifica-
tion model as developed by Riley, Johnson and Foner (1972) and Riley (1976),
which lays out the groundwork for an empirical application of the age strati-
fication model.

Theoretical Framework for a Cohort-Historical

Study: The Age Stratification Model

There are two major theoretical perspectives within the sociologi-
cal subfield of age differentiation and the life course (Elder, 1975):
the sociocultural approach as developed by Neugarten and Datan (1973),
Neugarten and Hagestad (1976), and Neugarten, Moore and Lowe (1963), and
the age-stratification approach as presented by Foner (1975, Riley,
Johnson and Foner (1972), and Riley (1973, 1976). These theoretical per-
spectives provide complementary insights on age differentiation and the
life course. However, it is the latter theoretical framework that is of
concern here. The cohort historical approach of the age-stratification
model has had major impact on the sociology of age, both theoretically
and empirically. Most important, it has sensitized researchers on age to
structural and historical factors. This focus on structural and his-
torical factors is essential to any study of social change and adult
development, and merits an in-depth presentation of its conceptual domains.

Definition of Age

Before proceeding further with a discussion of age and its rela-
tionship to the social structure, a statement of basic definitions is
necessary. Throughout this discussion, age will refer to chronological
age and how it defines an approximate index or stage in the aging process.
Aging, as a sociological concept, is "a sequence of statuses and roles,
expectations and relationships, constituting in the broadest meaning of
the word, an individual's 'career'" (Van Dusen and Sheldon, 1976: 106).
Over the life course individuals perform in certain roles, gain experience,
develop socially and psychologically, and change. As they age, individuals
acquire certain abilities and motivations as they lost others. They enter

new roles and relinquish others. Aging is not viewed as a unidimensional process. Rather it is a process that is a product of many factors. Through the aging process, a person moves through a series of age grades that are the range of age defined roles. These age grades constitute a graded movement from one age defined role to the next (Gulliver, 1968). The life course, in relation to the aging process, specifies the opportunities and responsibilities people have during various phases of life. It is typically viewed as a progression of changes from infancy through old age as though there is some inherent ground plan to all human development.

Within the sociocultural perspective, age is meaningful only in relational terms; it is meaningful in signifying that someone is closer to birth than to death or that someone is older or younger than someone else. Rossi (1980) has labeled this perspective the "timing-of-Events-model" in adult development whereby individuals determine whether they are "on-time" or "off-time" with respect to critical life events (Neugarten, 1968). For the middle years of life, chronological age is not nearly as meaningful as the age norms that are deeply rooted in culture and society; this in part is a result of the great variation in the social timing of life events. Age is most meaningful if there is knowledge of a particular culture and when there are social meanings attached to given chronological ages. The cultural context for understanding age is critical to the sociocultural perspective because it allows sociologists to interpret life experiences in terms of the social definitions relevant to actors.

The cohort-historical approach of the age stratification model emphasizes chronological age and sees adult development as part of the

larger aging process that is channeled through a series of distinct hier-
archical age strata. The age-stratification model, most completely pre-
sented in the third volume of the Aging and Society series (1972), was
primarily developed by Matilda White Riley and Anne Foner.[2] The intel-
lectual history of this approach has its origins in Mannheim's theoretical
analysis of generations (1928) and in the work of social demographer Ryder
(1964, 1965) on cohort analysis. Mannheim, in his classic essay on "The
Problem of Generations," used the concept of generation (though currently
his use of generation would be the equivalent of a birth cohort rather
than the temporal unit of a kinship structure) to bridge life time and
historical time.

> Generation location is based on the existence of biological
> rhythm in human existence--the factors of life and death, a
> limited span of life, and aging. Individuals who belong to the
> same generation, who share the same year of birth, are endowed,
> to that extent, with a common location in the historical
> dimension of the social process (Mannheim, 1928/1952: 290).

Life time refers to an individual's chronological age and serves as a
rough indicators of an individual's position in the aging process. His-
torical time refers to historical location and the identification of
historical forces, particularly those that shape the experiences of birth
cohorts. By placing individuals in both specific historical locations
and in cohorts, age differentiates people according to historical experi-
ence. Similarity of historical location for a birth cohort results from
the fact that they experience the same events at the same point in the
life course. Thus the impact that any historical event will have for any
one cohort is contingent on the career stage (i.e. adolescence, young
adulthood) of the cohort. In Mannheim's phraseology, cohort differentia-
tion produces "fresh contact" with the historical world.

Ryder (1965) has also been influential in the development of the cohort-historical approach. In his article, "The Cohort as a Concept in the Study of Social Change," Ryder addresses the issue of how cohorts, due to their unique histories, are involved in the production of social changes. Reiterating Mannheim's point, Ryder states that "the members of any cohort are entitled to participate in only one slice of life--their unique location in the stream of history" (1965: 844). To take this point a step further, Ryder argues that through cohort succession (the replacement of one cohort by its neighboring younger cohort), social change can be measured as new cohorts provide the opportunity for social change to occur. If social change can be defined as "the transformation of the social structure" (1964: 460), then social change occurs to the extent that successive cohorts do something other than repeat the patterns of behavior of their predecessors, and thereby, alter the social structure. The most evident intercohort differences are variations in the population of a cohort: its composition and its size. Thus, as each new cohort reaches a major career stage, society has the task of assimilating it whether it be larger, as in the case of the cohort who were a part of the "baby boom," or smaller than the cohort it is replacing. Social change, as a function of intercohort differences, can occur either through demographic transformation or through the selective changes of its membership. In either event, pressures for social change arise from imbalances between cohort flow (movement of successive cohorts through the differing age strata with their gradual reduction and inevitable dissolution) and the social structure.

Structural Elements and Processes in the Age Stratification Model

    Riley and her associates (1972) and Riley (1976) have taken these earlier works and integrated them into a sociology of age stratification model. The goal of the age stratification model is, first to explain the relationship between aging and the social structure, and secondly, to explain the link between aging and social change. The use of birth cohorts links the study of social change and life course patterns. Riley's conceptual model (see Figure 1) attempts to explain these sets of relationship at a number of analytically distinct levels.[3] To begin, in any social system, people, roles and age strate are sepearate but interdependent ways of conceptualizing relationships. The actors in a social system are conceived as strata of persons of similar ages, forming an ordered series of people from younger to older strata within a population. Roles are entered and relinquished as members of these age strata move through the age stratification system.

    The age strata are conceptualized as the intersection of the two processes: age processes and societal processes. The age processes involve people and cohort flow through the age-stratification system; the societal processes involve the historical development of age-graded roles. These processes are interpenetrating and feed into two separate age structures: the age structure of people and the age-related role structure.

    We can conceive of the age strata as comprised of pairs of structural elements. In the population structure, there are persons of a given age with a capacity to perform age-related acts. The role structure provides age-related expectation/sanction appropriate to persons of particular ages. Each dynamic process directly affects its respective age

FIGURE 1

CONCEPTUAL MODEL OF AGE STRATIFICATION*

Age Processes	Age Structure of People		Age Structure of Roles	Societal Processes
Cohort Flow ⟶	Persons of given ages	⟵ Allocation ⟶	Roles open to persons of given ages	
Aging ⟶	Age related acts or cap-acities	⟵ Socialization ⟶	Age related expectations and sanctions	General processes affecting roles
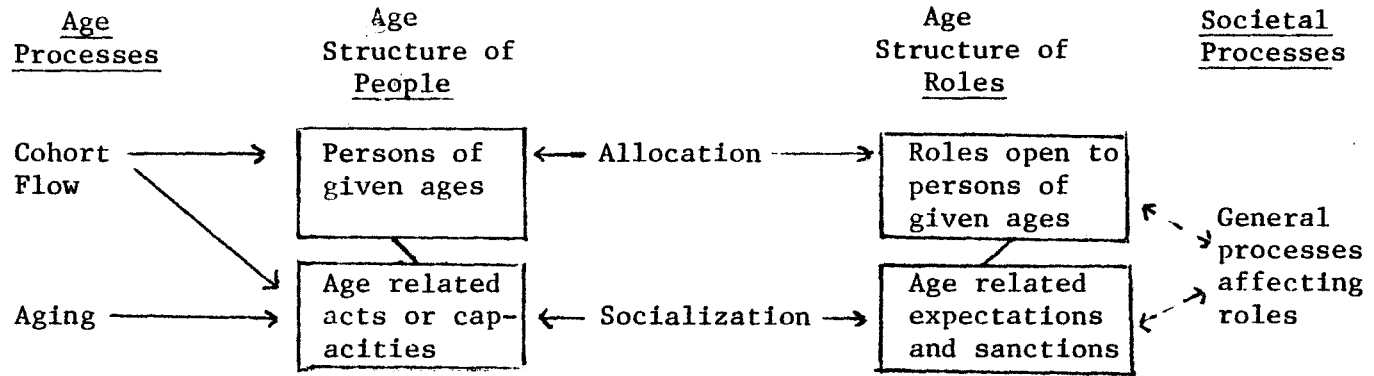
*Adopted from Riley, Johnson and Foner, 1972

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structure and corresponding structural elements; age processes directly affect the population structure while societal processes directly affect the role structure.

The age processes of aging and cohort flow move people from one stratum to the next. People within a cohort age and as they age they change. Simultaneously, new cohorts are being born and replacing older cohorts as they die off. At any period of time, the age strata of a population can be viewed as the composite of successive cohorts; the strata are differentiated from one another through the process of cohort flow. So while at anyone moment in time successive cohorts fit together to form the age strata of the population, in the process of cohort replacement they become more and more differentiated as a result of a number of phenomena: modification through migration, gradual size reduction, and eventual dissolution. When a cohort starts out, it is at its maximum size; however, this initial size and composition changes over the course of its life because certain members of the cohort survive longer than others.

At the macrolevel, age strata are differentiated by cohort flow. However, cohorts cannot be understood without mention of the individuals who are aging within them. At the microlevel, age strata are differentiated by aging individuals and their stage of the life course. Aging is not a uniform process and can be affected by many social factors. Consequently, patterns of aging differ among successive cohorts. It is important to note here, and is a critical point that will be returned to time and again, that each new cohort of individuals is born at a unique historical time and confronts its own special sequence of social and environmental events. The obvious result is that each new cohort cannot follow the precise path of its predecessors. Because of cohort flow, aging

is a variable and each cohort ages in different ways altering the age
strata in the process. As Riley states:

> People who were born at different times have lived
> through different intervals of history; and even when they
> encounter the same historical situation, they may, because
> they differ in age, experience it differently (1971: 80).

Each new cohort is exposed to the cohort that has preceded it
through each particular stratum; this is, in part, because the cohort that
went first molded and transformed the age structure in response to its
particular social and historical experiences. For any cohort, patterns of
aging will reflect its historical background, its unique compositional
segments and its use of age as a criterion for role assignments and role
performaces. Cohorts may live as contemporaries but they are not coeval
in degree of life experiences or historical experiences.

While the age processes are directly related to the age structure of
the population, societal processes are directly related to the age struc-
ture of roles. Age can be either a direct or indirect criterion for enter-
ing and relinquishing roles as well as affecting role prescriptions and role
allocation. The role structure acts as a kind of screen which cohorts of
individuals are concurrently passing. Age criteria for roles form the bases
for allocating and assigning people to positions in the social structure
(Riley, 1976). Age ties together complexes of roles that might otherwise
be differentiated; for instance, in late adulthood a woman might function
as grandmother, mother, and student all at once. Over time, the role
structure undergoes modification and change. This happens not only because
the role structure influences the life course patterns of successive cohorts
but because in turn these life course patterns influence the role structure
itself.

To visualize the age strata, one can think of them as a cross-section slice through the two concurrent processes just described and their continual interaction with the four structural elements. In viewing the population structure and the role structure, both can be differentiated by two age critera: cohort membership and life course stage. At the macroscopic level, age strata, formed by successive cohorts, are observable as well as the interrelationships between each stratum. At the microscopic level, the individual and the effects of membership specific to each stratum are observable. The effects of belonging to a particular stratum can be observed insofar as each stratum[4] has different available roles that vary by type, by the number of types that are available, and by the complexes of role types that are accessible.

Articulating Processes .

In addition to the age processes and structural elements of the age-stratification moel, two separate articulating processes are at work: allocation and socialization. Allocation is conceptualized as the assignment of individuals of given ages to appropriate roles. Socialization teaches individuals how to perform new roles at each stage of the life course. In allocation, procedures and agencies operate to move people into and out of roles and relationships with role partners. Some allocative procedures are social phenomena that are either formalized legal processes (retirement) or more informal processes. However, some allocative procedures are social as well as biological or vital processes (motherhood); but typically these nonsocial processes are socio-cultural in character.

The socialization process is experienced at each stage of the life course as individuals learn new roles, adjust to constant but changing roles, and adapt to the absence of recently relinquished roles. Socializa-

tion also involves special structures of age relationships: children are younger than their parents, teachers are older (though not always) than their students. Allocation and socialization are parallel processes that vary by stage as cohorts of individuals move across the life course.

Social Change in the Age Stratification Model

Until now, this discussion has focused on the processes and structural elements of the age stratification model. The model emphasizes and selectively integrates those parts of the social system in which age has important implications. It specifies the relationship between aging and the social structure through its analysis of age strata and how they are generated and differentiated. It identifies how this is a simultaneous phenomena that occurs at both a macrolevel through the analysis of cohort patterns and at the microlevel through an analysis of life course patterns. The relationship between aging and the social structure, however, must be viewed in terms of social change as well.

Within the theoretical framework of age stratification there are two interdependent types of change occurring: changes at the societal level and personal changes evidenced as people age. Aging is influenced by societal factors and social change. Again to quote Riley, "There is a dynamic interplay between people growing older and society undergoing change; each provides flexibility for the other" (1978: 2). Riley rejects the notion that social change is the result of exclusively societal alterations; a changing society cannot be understood without some regard for the changing behavior of the people involved. The evidence that there is this interplay between aging and social change can be summarized in two principles: first, the life course patterns of individuals are affected by social and environ-

mental changes; and second, when cohorts of individuals are affected by social changes in similar ways to the degree that their collective lives can produce further social change. There is continuous feedback between these two types of changes which provide continuous plasticity for each other.

The evidence of this interaction between aging and societal changes is clear. More difficult to specify and test is how these mutual influences work: under what kinds of conditions do individual lives alter social norms and social institutions, and how do individuals alter their lives in response to social and environmental changes. Riley (1980) has specified three major interconnections that provide some understanding of some of the mechanisms at work: cohort flow, life long socialization, and interdependence among the age strata of a population. Cohort flow has already been discussed to some degree as an age process in the age stratification model. Each new cohort is different because it belongs to its own historical moment and cannot age in the exact fashion as the cohort that preceeded it. Because each cohort has a unique historical perspective and set of experiences, it develops its own set of common definitions and common social norms. As this set of common responses solidifies over time, the cohort presses for changes and alterations in roles and values.

The implication of differing cohorts that continuously succeed each other through the age structure is that a continuing conflict between people and roles exists. In the age stratification model, the articulating processes of allocation and socialization are conceived as matching people and roles, but often certain imbalances are beyond the capacities of these processes. Manifestly, it appears if there is a balance in the quantity of people and roles there is less likelihood of strain and conflict within

or between age strata. Conflict is most likely to happen if roles and other social structural facilities contract or expand in response to demographic factors. Cohort size is an intrinsic source of imbalance that is frequently cited; in discussions on the large size of the 'baby boom" cohort, cohort size explains the experience of a generation faced with too few schools or too few jobs as they reached each respective life stage. The increase in cohort longevity throughout this century has placed older Americans in the circumstance of having outlived their allocated roles in the labor force and in their families, while new roles have not evolved to replace their former ones. The consequences of this continued imbalance mean that the role structure must continually readjust to age-related imbalances in order to match cohort size. Modifications in role complexes occur in relation to alterations in the requirements for roles, flexibility in age-criteria for role incumbency, and generally in the number and kinds of roles that are available.

> At another frontier of our research, we are concerned with aging <u>individuals</u>, with how it comes about that they respond in particular ways to particular changes in society . . . in the aging process, age roles set one boundary of the possible, just as biology sets the other boundary. Yet within these boundaries, individuals are far from passive: they define situations for themselves, make decisions, take initiatives. Though aging is channeled by history, there are wide latitudes within which individuals shape their own life" (1980:2).

This quote by Riley (1980) refers to another mechanism that provides some understanding of the relationship between individual aging and social change--life long socialization. Riley and the age stratifcation model have been influential because they have recognized that a life span sociology must replace an exclusive focus on either child development or gerontology (Dowd, 1980). Adult socialization occurs because entry into every role provides an opportunity for maintaining or changing competencies

and capacities learned in the past. Because of these role changes, childhood socialization does not thoroughly prepare individuals for the responsibilities, skills and values of adulthood. The expanding litera- ture on socialization (Mortimer and Simmons, 1978) has connected the processes of socialization with analyses of adulthood. Riley has argued that expectations are the force behind individuals adjusting to changes in society and in their personal situations. Through the interaction of generations and cohorts, parents can influence their children because they _expect_ them to keep up with social change; many parents can expect their offspring to surpass their occupational achievements or limited educational attainment. And as a result, the power of expectations can have varying consequences. An example of how expectations affect the aging process can be understood in the case of mass communications and health. ·Through mass media campaigns, people can change their life-time habits of eating and exercise, and thereby expect to avoid hear disease in their later years. The notion of expectations as the force that socializes people to adjust to social change incorporates into the age stratification model the acting individual who chooses option and acts accordingly.

The last mechanism of the interconnection between aging and social change is the interdependence among age strata. Age not only sorts people into age-specific places within the age stratification system, but it also integrates and separates strata from one another. Age integration occurs because people of a particular age tend to resemble each other in life course stage and cohort membership. There is an age-based solidarity because age works to integrate role complexes that are often unique and might otherwise be differentiated if it were not for their common life

stage. This is not to say that age-based solidarity is the only source of stratification. Within an age stratum, individuals can be highly differentiated according to other bases of stratifcation, particularly social class.

Just as life course stage and cohort membership serve to integrate age strata, they also serve to segregate strata. Parents and offspring are inherently differentiated by age; the number of year separating a mother and her daugher remains fixed at all times. These biological differences endure in the social structure over time. And yet, the age strata are continually interacting as members of the same society with the result that a change in behavior in one age stratum can have consequences for other strata creating continuous potential for conflict and change. This potential for change works to alter the social structure as well as the aging process.

Another source of tension and pressure for change emerges from the arhythmic relationship between individual aging and social change. There is a rhythm to the flow of individuals through society just as there is a rhythm to society itself; and the two processes are not synchronized with one another. Timing, then creates a strain between the processes of aging, social change and cohort flow. An individual's career, reflected in the timing and sequencing of life events, is often aimed at coordinating his/her own life choices with the demands and constraints of societal dynamics. At the aggregate level, the during and pace of life course transitions of cohorts shows how cohort flow accelerates and decelerates to respond to those same societal dynamics.

The Life Course Perspective in Relation to the Age Stratification Model

These issues of synchronization and timing are crucial dimensions in the theoretical model of age stratification. How they have been used in the

life course literature has been a source of confusion to many researchers in the area and merits some clarification at this time. Rossi (1980), in a footnote in her article on women's lives and life span theories, notes that the life course perspective is an "off-shoot" of the age stratification speciality. Few students of the life course are directly involved in applications of the theoretical model of age stratification. Rather, most sociologists and family historians have disregarded the model while adopting the perspective that utilizes extensively issues such as timing and synchronization of both individual life course patterns and family life cycle. But the distinction between an empirical application of the age stratification model and a life course analysis should be understood. The assumptions, propositions and postulates of the model are all included in the former. The latter borrows selectively and often critically from the age stratification model. An analysis of the former subsumes the latter; intrinsic to any empirical study based on the age stratification model is a life course perspective. The reverse is not necessarily true. The life course is not a theoretical model, but rather a set of concepts used most frequently in historical demography and quantitative sociology (Cherlin, 1979). For our purposes here, the most important life course concepts for use are the timing and sequencing of life events.

A person's life history is the product of interdependent multiple histories: their employment, occupational, marital and parenting careers that tend to dominate in middle adulthood. The meshing of each of these separate careers gives each life history its own particular timetable and sequencing pattern. The life course perspective assumes that the differences and variations that characterize adulthood are a result of competing demands on an individual's resources and energy. The interweaving of

these multiple identities can create problems of coordination in every-
day life. Management of these interwoven careers occurs across the life
course, and is shaped by various historical forces. The most frequently
identified structural and historical influences are demographic changes,
class structure, age normative expectations, and other ideology influences.

The timing and sequencing of life course transitions is an essen-
tial component of life course analysis, and used extensively in this
research. But the life course perspective has defined and charted pro-
cedures for analyzing the dialectic specifically between the family and
society through its conceptual applications. So while the life course can
provide a better way to study families and how they change as individual
members age, the age stratification model can tell us more about how to
study the effects of age on peoples' lives. It can inform us of the ways
in which age locates individuals into the family as well as into the
larger social structure.

Empirical Application

This research uses the age stratification model to guide analysis
of empirical data. Riley's conceptual model, as described thus far, is
"an outline of abstract ideas, designed to generate specific formulations
regarding stages, patterns, change and stability over the life course"
(Riley, 1976: 189). The age stratification model is regarded as a theory
of aging in which propositions are posited and tested in order to further
test more specific hypotheses with respect to aging, the social structure,
and social change. Dowd (1980) has argued that the model has not generated
any testable hypotheses although it has had tremendous impact on the
empirical analyses of age, period, and cohort effects. Simlar to the
impact Cummings and Henry (1961) had on gerontological research a decade

earlier, Riley's propositions have been used to generate methodological strategies and to select variables, and not for their theoretical content.

According to Dowd, the intent of Cummings and Henry and of Riley was to develop a theory; but in fact, these researchers have provided more methological than theoretical direction. For example, Riley made social gerontologists trained in the legacy of Cummings and Henry aware of structural factors associated with age-related phenomena and of the impact of historical events on the life stages of individuals. Dowd argues that this theoretical influence on the subfield has been general and that Riley's work has been noted more for its specific influence on the methological problem of age, period and cohort effects. Empirical studies applying the model are sparse. Riley, herself, has not yet emipirically tested her model. This presents some different kinds of methodological difficulties apart from the study of different effects. One specific problem is that Riley and her associates never identify either the age strata of the adulthood years nor the age roles and social expectations specific to each age stratum (Rahav, 1979). Considering the complexity of the conceptual framework, the type and amount of longitudinal data needed are usually unavailable and that has served to limit further empirical studies based on the age stratification model (Vinovskis, 1977). Since the model provides an overall heuristic device for further comprehending phenomena associated with adult development, it can be argued that through empirical application of the model, it is possible for research to go beyond the study of effects, and through exploratory analyses generate testable hypotheses on the relationship between aging, social structure, and social change.

The goal of any empirical study using the cohort-historical approach

of the age stratification model should be to measure life course changes. The basic measure of social change in this context is to see the longitudinal experiences of individuals viewed as members of cohorts. Understanding experience as longitudinal is a necessity because in that way only can the sequence of role transitions be charted over time. A longitudinal view also permits the study of multiple role involvements over time. The distribution of role careers can shift at any stage in the life course; some roles will be relinquished and others added. The combination of these role involvements can vary for different stages of the life course and the management of resources and energies will dictate in which ways these roles will be combined. Under different social and historical conditions, cohorts collectively respond with a range of typical strategies more prevalent than others. Cohorts will, in the aggregate, create a range of characteristics of life course patterns for their generation. The research questions that will be explored here are based on this understanding of the process of cohort choice and the flow of generational strategies as one cohort replaces another cohort through the age strate. Three research questions which emerge out of this view of life course change will be used to analyze the data: first, with respect to participation in paid work and family roles, what are the various life course patterns followed by the sample of urban American women in their middle years; second, have these life course patterns changed over time; and third, what are the significant differences between birth cohorts that demonstrate the degree to which these life course patterns have changed over time. The tasks of the first two questions are to identify the different patterns of adult development and historical changes in the prevalence of different patterns of adult development.

The answer to the third question lays out the groundwork for a second set of questions derived from a cohort-historical perspective. If there are significant differences that are found between contiguous birth cohorts, what are some of the possible historical influences that produce those cohort differences? How can cohort differences be linked to other historical changes? And are there specific historical events that can differentiate one birth cohort from the next? As already presented, Riley has identified the importance of two articulating processes that work to coordinate the relationship of the four structural elements of the model: allocation as the mechanism that assigns people of given ages to certain roles and socialization as the mechanism that teaches individuals how to perform roles at each stage of the life course. Riley argues that to specify possible historical influences and to relate historical change to cohort differences, the researcher must identify the changing <u>alloca-</u><u>tional needs</u> and periods of socialization required by successive cohorts as they occupy a selected age stratum. Three factors must be considered in relating historical conditions to cohort differences: how are individuals allocated as each cohort reaches a critical life stage? Has the time required for learning to perform those roles changed? And what is the result of individual volition? The cumulative outcome of all of these factors is the timing of transitions of a cohort. Cohort timing of life events reflects how allocational needs of the society have shifted, how periods of socialization for performance of social roles has expanded or contracted, and how individuals behave, to some degree, as wilfull actors. Therefore, the timing and sequencing of transitions are the two most important measures which can relate cohort differences to historical changes and identity the impact of these changes in the life course patterns of women.

The ability to identify specific effects related to allocational
changes or period of socialization for cohorts has been studied by metho-
dologists in their desire to separate and isolate effects. The data dis-
cussed here allow only a focus on the cohort differences in timing and
sequencing of life course transitions. Some discussion of effects will
be presented, but overall changes in these articulating processes will be
examined in discussions on the historical evidence of changing labor force
participation, marital and mothering patterns.

A study by Uhlenberg (1974) offers a methodological framework for
implementing and analyzing the conceptual model proposed by age stratifica-
tion. Uhlenberg, using selected census data, focused upon
how members of successive cohorts were distributed among various possible
life cycle (his terminology) patterns. He decided to look at women aged
15 to 50 for two selected birth cohorts: 1890-1894 and 1930-1934. Uhlen-
berg made a critical methodological choice that has distinguished his
study from other studies of this kind. Rather than studying each variable
separately and treating them in an isolated fashion, i.e., marriage, child-
gearing and so on (see Glick, 1977 and Glick and Parke, 1965 for examples
of this), Uhlenberg developed life cycle typologies which integrated the
cumulative significance of several variables over time. Therefore, by
looking at four variables in combination with each other—mortality, marriage,
childbearing and marital dissolution—Uhlenberg created five life cycle
types which he was able to compare for two selected cohorts. He identified
the dominant life cycle as the "preferred life cycle" (his term) meaning
that by the time a female reached age 50 she had married, borne at least
one child, and still had her first marriage intact. Besides this dominant
life pattern, there were four "deviant" (again his terminology) life

cycle patterns which failed to conform to the preferred pattern: early death life cycle, spinster life cycle, childless life cycle, and unstable marriage with children (the woman's first marriage is broken before she reaches age 50). The utility of Uhlenberg's methodology is that it provides for intercohort as well as intracohort comparisons.

Based on this kind of analysis, a life course pattern typology has been developed here from the conjunction of three sets of events: paid employment histories, marital histories, and mothering histories. Each history for the sample was analyzed separately and charted longitudinally. Chapter IV presents the analyses of the modal experiences of each of the separate histories; from these separate analyses a life course patterns typology based on cumulative life experiences was constructed (see Figure 2). Nine different types were identified based on cumulative life experience and these nine patterns represent the experiences of 86 per cent of the sample.

Using the life course patterns typology based on cumulative life experience, analyses were performed on the timing, sequencing and duration of these patterns. This analysis incorporated data on the ordering of these life course events and on the timing of those events. This is a critical departure from most studies, which do not integrate these concerns; most examine the timing and sequencing of a single event. For instance, Boocock (1978), Hogan (1980) and Uhlenberg (1974), performed empirical analyses only on the sequences of life course transitions. Looking at only a single life course event, Modell, Furstenberg and Hershberg (1976), Modell, Furstenberg and Strong (1978) and Winsborough (1978) respectively studied the timing of marriage and the transition to adulthood and the timing of education and the transition to adulthood.

FIGURE 2

INITIAL CONSTRUCTION OF THE LIFE COURSE PATTERNS TYPOLOGY BASED ON MODAL EXPERIENCES
OF SEPARATE ROLE HISTORIES

Paid Employment Histories-Modal Experiences
    Still in 1st Employment Period
    Exited 1st Employment Period-Has not Returned
    Currently Employed with 2 or more Employment Periods
    Not Currently Employed with 2 or more Employment Periods
    Never Employed

Marital Histories-Modal Experiences
    Still in 1st Marriage
    Out of 1st Marriage and Currently Remarried
    Out of 1st Marriage and NOt Remarried
    Never Married

                                               Life Course Patterns
                                               Typology
                                            based on Cumulative
                                               Life Experience

Mothering Histories-Modal Experiences
    One or more Children
    No Children

Along with Uhlenberg's study, both Boocock's (1978) work on methodological alternatives for social and historical research on the sequencing of the life course and Modell, Furstenberg and Strong's (1978) work on timing and transitions further inform the construction of a life course patterns typology. Boocock offers a way of arranging the interrelationship of life course patterns as the sequence or order in which events occur (see Table 1). For the sample as a whole and for each individual cohort as well, Table 2 would then be completed as a way of identifying intracohort variations. Table 2 would also permit intercohort comparisons for each of the life course patterns typology. Clearly some patterns in Table 1 are more likely than others to be experienced by the sample. Presented as they are, these patterns do not reflect the complexities of most women's employment histories which typically include some labor force exit; nor the increased complexity of most women's marital histories given the increased incidence of divorce. In addition, these patterns reflect only the early stages of the middle years. In order to extend these patterns to include the whole of the middle years for the oldest women in the sample, additional transitions related to employment, marriage and mothering as well as the timing of events have been added. Therefore, while six basic patterns have been initially presented, this typology has been expanded considerable to represent patterns over time. It should be emphasized that not all patterns have been analyzed, but rather the modal patterns of the sample. From the analyses in Chapter V, based on the sequencing and timing of life course transitions, an expanded life course patterns typology was created (see Figure 3) reflecting not only the modal patterns of the separate life histories but also the timing, sequencing and duration initial life course transitions. Returning again

TABLE 1

CONSTRUCTION OF TYPOLOGY OF LIFE COURSE PATTERNS BASED ON SEQUENCING

OF INITIAL TRANSITIONS*

Individual Life Course Pattern	First Transition	Second Transition	Third Transition
A	Labor Force Entry	Marriage	Motherhood
B	Labor Force Entry	Motherhood	Marriage
C	Marriage	Labor Force Entry	Motherhood
D	Marriage	Motherhood	Labor Force Entry
E	Motherhood	Marriage	Labor Force Entry
F	Motherhood	Labor Force Entry	Marriage

*Adopted from Boocock, 1978.

TABLE 2

PERCENTAGE OF INDIVIDUALS IN EACH TEN-YEAR COHORT WHO
EXPERIENCE VARIOUS TYPES OF EACH LIFE COURSE PATTERN*

Life Course Pattern	Year of Birth		
	1923-1932	1933-1942	1943-1952
A			
B			
C			
D			
E			
F			

*Adopted from Boocock, 1978.

FIGURE 3

CONSTRUCTION OF AN EXPANDED LIFE COURSE PATTERNS TYPOLOGY
BASED ON THE SEQUENCING, TIMING AND DURATION OF
SELECTED LIFE COURSE TRANSITIONS

Differences in
Sequencing of Life
Course Transitions

Life Course Patterns
Typology
based on Cumulative
Life Experience

Differences
In Timing of Life
Course Transitions

Expanded Life
Course Patterns
Typology

Differences
in Duration of Role
Occupancy

47
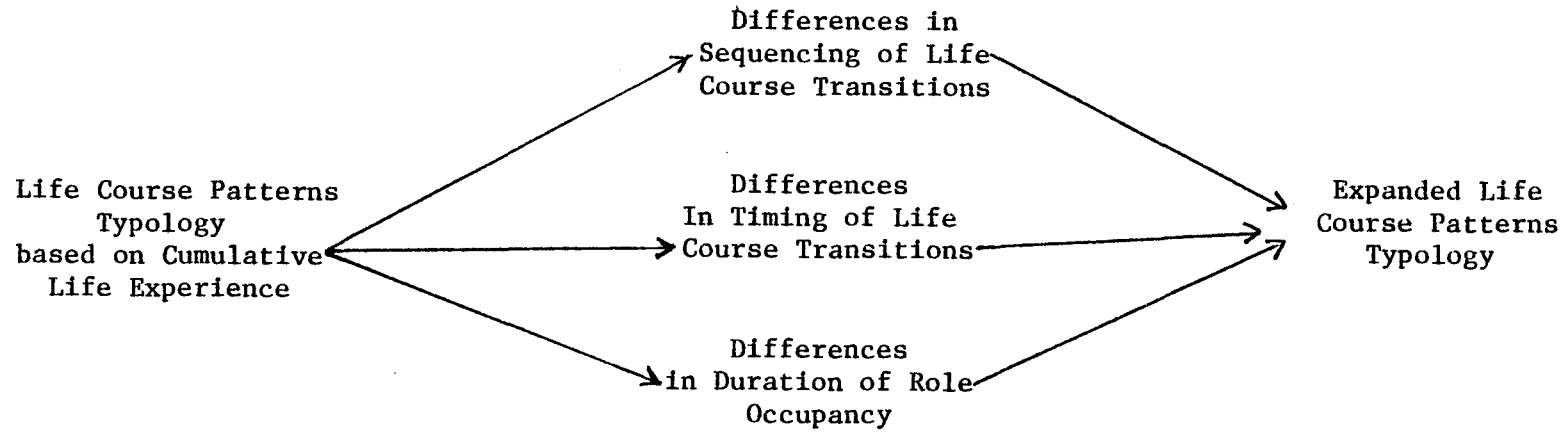
to Table 2, the expanded life course patterns typology was analyzed for the prevalence of certain patterns among and between cohorts.

Analysis of this data for intracohort and intercohort differences is based on some formal principles of the age stratification model that have been set forth for empirical application. These principles are based on the use of cross-sectional data to study age strata differences and period differences. They are presented in full here because they provide the foundation for identifying life course differences and cohort differences in cross-sectional as well as longitudinal data. Riley, Johnson and Foner (1972) have set down some formal guidelines for analysis and interpretations on research of this kind. As they point out, aging and cohort flow occur as empirical processes with their own particular historical and social conditions. A specific task of the age stratification model is to understand the life course differences (within a cohort) and the cohort differences in life course patterns (among successive cohorts) that are attributable to each separate dynamic process. Riley (1976) calls these life course differences and cohort differences processual data that can be translated into both cross-sectional data and longitudinal data. Cross-sectional data has been traditionally used to perform period analyses while longitudinal data on successive cohorts has typically been used to perform cohort analysis. Period analysis on age specific information arranges cross-sectional data according to date of observation, usually for the purposes of comparing historical periods. Cohort analysis, in contrast, organizes longitudinal data according to date of birth in order to compare cohorts. With respect to the current research problem, the importance of cohort analysis is that it focuses on the concept of cohort timing rather than the concept of societal timing

measured in period analysis. In addition, cohort analysis has the advant-age of allowing for simultaneous examination of both differences of life course patterns within a cohort and cohort differences in life course patterns among successive cohorts. It is only through comparing succes-sive cohorts that a researcher can compare and contrast the differences in life course patterns that occur as a result of cohort succession within a single population.

Given this nomenclature of life course difference (Ld), cohort differences (Cd), and age strata differences (Sd), there are two formal principles, each with a set of corollaries, that guide analyses in age stratification research:

> Principle 1 holds that (at least in a closed population) the differences (or similarities among old, middle-aged, and young, at a given time, can be completely described in terms of life course differences and cohort differences (Riley, 1976: 201).

> Corollaries to Principle 1:

> Corollary 1A: Strata differences can be understood as a reflection of cohort differences when it is reasonable to assume that there are no appreciable life course variations in the measure under scrutiny.

> Corollary B: The differences among strata can be properly attributed to changes over the life course when cohorts can reasonably be assumed to be substantially alike in a certain respect (Riley, 1976: 203).

> Principle 2 holds that any change in the age strata between two or more periods of observation reflects the cohort differences in the life course patterns of those cohorts existing at the particular time periods (Riley, 1976: 204).

> Corollary to Principle 2:

> Corollary 2A: If there are no differences among cohorts, then there will be no differences among period, regardless of the life course patterns (Riley, 1976: 204).

The use and application of these principles and corollaries depends con-

siderably on the nature of available data. Although the data for this study were collected at one point in time, a synthetic longitudinal data base has been constructed using retrospective life histories. This synthetic longitudinal data differs from traditional cohort data because it is not constructed from a series of different cross-sectional studies that consist of age specific data. Rather, the construction and nature of this data base represents the responses and behaviors of the same sample of women over selected stages of the life course. There are clear advantages and disadvantages to self-reported life histories though in most cases methodologists seem to agree that the advantages outweight the disadvantages. Reflecting the consensus of this opinion, Clausen has stated that, "if retrospective reinterpretation creates problems in reconstructing life histories, it is nevertheless the sustenance on which our identities thrive and, as analysts, we shall have to rely heavily on individual reconstruction" (1972: 463).

Principle 1 holds that similarities or differences between age strata can be measured in terms of comparing longitudinal differences within cohorts (LD) or different patterns of longitudinal differences across different birth cohorts (CD). The combined consequences of having both ld and cd is that age strata (or cross-sectional differences as they are called by Palmore, 1978) differences can be understood in terms of one or the other or both. Dealing only with cross-section data makes the likelihood of isolating either LD or CD, as suggested in Corollaries 1A or 1B, more difficult and increases the chances of misinterpreting the data. But since the data used here are synthetic longitudinal data for the same group over time it is easier to isolate SD based on either LD or CD, and consequently this research is not restrained by the traditional problems

associated with period analysis. Refering to Figure 4, the observable age strata differences are measured by looking at two cohorts at the same period in time for cross-sectional data. Period differences (or time-lag differences as they are called by Palmore, 1978) are measured in cross-sectional data by looking at the older cohort at the earlier measurement and the younger cohort at the later measurement so that the older cohort is the same age as the younger cohort at the later point in time. Principle 2 applies here insofar as period differences can only exist if there are cohort differences. If there are age strata differences at any two time periods, this reflects cohort differences for those cohorts that are ging studied at those particular points in time.

In Figure 4B, longitudinal data has been used to set up a cohort table for the same sample over time. Life course differences, age strata differences and period differences are all measurable. Figure 4A is set up for period analysis, but Figure 4B is set up for cohort analysis. In the former, cohort differences are not measurable whereas in the latter they are. Cohort differences are not observable in the minimum set of three cells; it can only be observed by comparing longitudinal differences across a second set of cells as shown in Figure 4B. For the purposes of this research, cohort differences can be measured empirically and used in the analysis here to identify changing life course patterns among and between cohorts.[6]

The level of analysis for this research is based on measuring observable life course differences and cohort differences for a sample of urban American women. Palmore argues that there are three levels of analysis: measuring differences, inferring effects, and imputing causes. The level of analysis here required measuring differences. The separation and

FIGURE 4

MEASURING OBSERVABLE DIFFERENCE USING CROSS-SECTIONAL AND LONGITUDINAL DATA

Figure 4A: Observable Differences Using Cross-Sectional Data[a]

Period

	Early		Later

Cohort   Younger   A — 1 — B

1=Life Course Differences (Ld)
  Ex: (B – A)
2=Age Strata. Differences (Sd)
  Ex: (C – A)
3=Period Differences   (Pd)
  Ex: (B – C)

          2   3

          Older   C
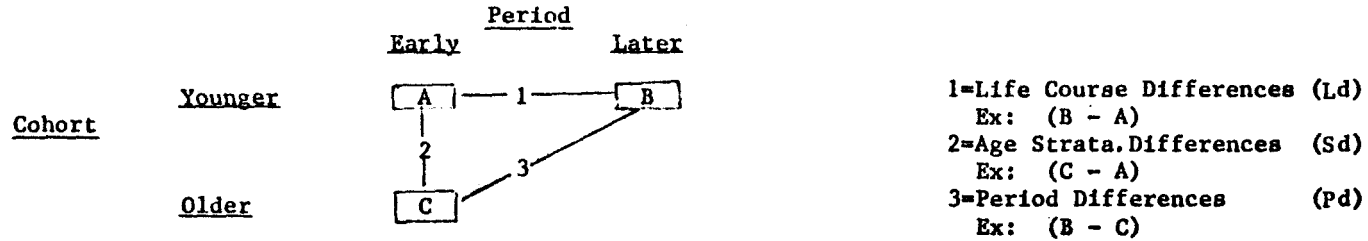
Figure 4B: Observable Differences Using Longitudinal Data[b]

Age

          Age X   Age Y   Age Z

          Younger   D — 1 — E
                          4

Cohort   3   2   3   2

          Older   F — 1 — G   H
                          4

1=Life Course Differences (Ld)
  Ex: (E – D)
       (G – F)
2=Age Strata Differences (Sd)
  Ex: (G – D)
       (H – E)
3=Period Differences   (Pd)
  Ex: (G – E)
       (F – D)
4=Cohort Differences   (Cd)
  Ex: ((G – F) – (E – D))
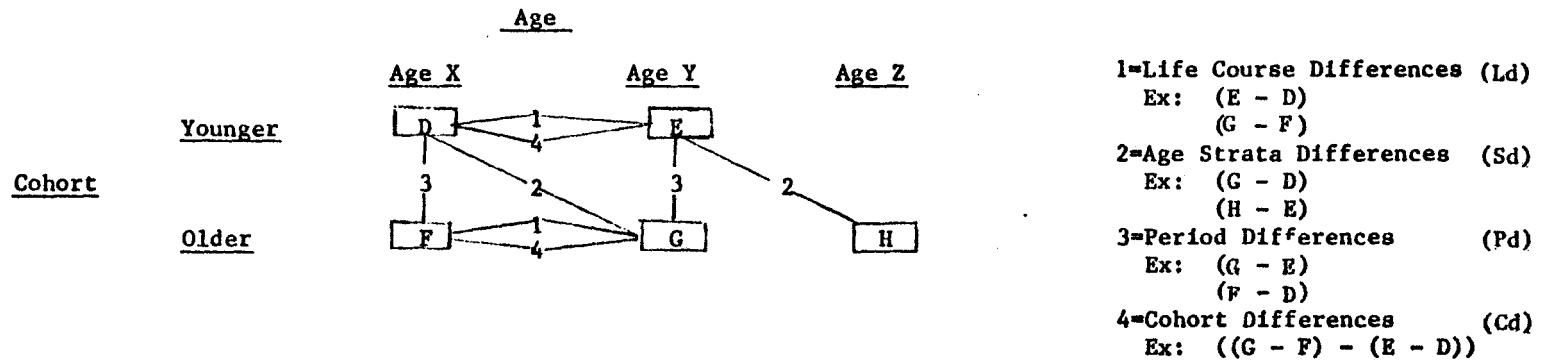
[a]This figure is adopted from Palmore, 1978

[b] The ages here are all equal in years apart

combination of effects are all derived from observed patterns in Ld, Sd, and Pd. Imputing causes is theoretically derived and requires information from outside the table. The emphasis here will be to measure observable differences in conjunction with imputed causes derived from the cohort-historical approach of the age stratification model.

CHAPTER II

<u>Footnotes</u>

[1]The one major exception to this phenomenon is the National
Longitudinal Study of Labor Market Experience (NLS) for four groups
of the United States population who were the following ages in 1965:
men 45 to 59, women 30 to 44, young men and women 14 to 24. The study
was contracted with the Center for Human Resource Research of The
Ohio State University with an initial plan that called for annual inter-
views over a five year period with representative samples of individuals.
Since the inception of the study, the study has been extended through
1984.

[2]Since this volume was written, originally as a program of
study made possible by a grant from The Ford Foundation to the Russell
Sage Foundation, Riley and Foner have moved in different directions
with respect to the age stratification model. Foner (1978) emphasizes
(unlike Riley, 1976) that the age stratification system is much like
other systems of social stratification. She argues that members of
various age strata have differential access to high rewarded roles.
Similarly, aging is also a form of social mobility according to Foner.
As people age, they move from one set of roles to another and receive
greater or lesser rewards than before. Aging, then, can prompt
upward or downward mobility according to Foner.

[3]The presentation of the discussion to follow relies heavily
on three articles written by Riley: "Age Strata in Social Systems,"
in R.H. Binstock and E. Shanas (eds.), <u>Handbook of Aging and the
Social Sciences</u>. New York: Van Nostrand, 1976; "Aging, Social Change
and the Power of Ideas." <u>Daedalus</u> 107(Fall): 39-52; "Aging from
Birth to Death and Social Change," Draft prepared for American Academy
of Arts and Sciences Session on New Frontiers in Science, San Francisco,
1980.

[4]Riley suggests that ther eleven different strata: infancy, early
childhood, late childhood, preadolescence, early adolescence, early
maturity, maturity, middle age, early old age, and advanced old age.
However, she never specifically states actual age ranges for these
age strata.

[5]Modell, Furstenberg and Hershberg (1976) have identified five
particular transitions in the specific transition to adulthood whereas
only three life course transitions are selected for analyses here. He

has added exit from school and departure from family of orientation.

[6]Palmore (1978) has argued that effects can be separated by
clearly distinguishing levels of analysis. Specifically, when
observed measurable differences are separated, effects can be
imputed. Palmore's conditions and assumptions have been used
here to identify basic patterns of observable differences from
cohort data; and in turn, identify effects that can be interpreted
from these significant differences.

CHAPTER III

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY: DATA, VARIABLE CONSTRUCTION
AND COHORT ANALYSIS

Research Design

Merton (1968) has written that there is a decisive difference in
"knowing how to test hypotheses" versus "knowing the theory" from which
to derive the hypotheses to be tested. Merton has further asserted
that the codification of theory, in this specific case a conceptual
model of age atratification, should be informed in two ways: empirical
studies must be theory oriented and theory should be empirically codifi-
able. In this investigation of the differences in adult development and
aging patterns for three contiguous ten-year birth cohorts, both of
Merton's concerns will be given appropriate attention. As an empirical
study, this research is grounded in the age stratification framework.
As already mentioned, there are limitations to the model that are proble-
matic when performing empirical analyses. In particular, "the assump-
and assertions far exceed empirical evidence (Elder, 1975: 187)," demand-
ing further theoretical reconceptualization and empirical work. Therefore,
the model will be used in a critical and evaluative fashion: first,
utilizing only those aspects of the model whose assumptions match the
assumptions of the data set selected for analysis; and secondly, utilizing
only those parts of the model that match the information provided by the
data. This selective use of the age stratification model represents a
sensitivity to Merton's concern that theory be empirically codifiable.

Throughout the analyses to follow, particular attention will be paid to different ways the age stratification model can be revised and reconceptualized for the purposes of empirical analyses. Because of the lack of empirical analyses by sociologists in the use of the cohort historical approach, this first step is critical for consequent theory development in the area of the sociology of age and the life course.

The research unit for this dissertation is a sample of three contiguous middle-aged birth cohorts of Chicago area women. The study, titled "The Changing Commitments of American Women to Work and Family Roles and Their Future Consequences for Social Security," was funded by the Social Security Administration and administered through the Center for the Comparative Study of Social Roles at Loyola University of Chicago. The interviews for the project were completed between late 1977 and early 1978. Sampling design, screening, interviewing and data reduction were done by the Survey Research Laboratory of the University of Illinois at Chicago Circle.[1]

The universe for this study consisted of all women aged 25 to 54 who resided in households in the Chicago Consolidated Area. This geographic area includes Cook, DuPage, Kane, Lake, McHenry and Will counties in Illinois plus the two northwest counties of Lake and Porter in Indiana. The sampling design had two major objectives:

1) To complete approximately 1000 interview with randomly selected women age 25 to 54
2) To oversample non-married respondents by a factor of 1.5.

The sampling procedure was a four-state probability design. The first two stages, census tracts and blocks, were selected with probabilities proportionate to the 1975 estimates of the total population.[2] From these selected census tracts and blocks, all households were listed and

selected for screening. To achieve the desired number of interviews with non-married respondents and including rates of cooperation, it was necessary to screen an average of 22 randomly selected households per block or block group. In order to yield the desired 1000 completed interviews, approximately 4400 households for women between the ages of 25 and 54, additional information for each eligible respondent was obtained regarding marital and employment status. In gathering the screening information, contacts were attempted at each household in the following sequence: face-to-face, telephone, face-to-face. Table 3 shows the screening results for all of the households contacted throughout the first three stages of the sampling procedure.

The final stage of the sample design was selecting eligible respondents from the screened households. From the 2294 eligible households, a total of 2418 women aged 25 to 54 were found. Of these, 1841 were married and 577 were not married. To complete the desired number of interviews with non-married respondents and attain the desired total of 1000 interviews, all non-married respondents were selected for interviewing. Table 4 shows the final disposition of the 1515 sampled cases. Interviewers completed a total of 996 interviews, a response rate of 72 per cent. Seventeen per cent of the eligibles refused to be interviewed, and the remaining 11 per cent of the eligibles were not interviewed due to non-contact, unavailability, inability to locate, and various other reasons. Of the completed 996 interviews, 64 per cent of the respondents were currently married and 36 per cent were not currently married.

To equalize the probabilities of selection, four weights have been used in this analysis. Two of the weights are derived from the unequal probabilities of selection for married and not married respondents.[3]

TABLE 3

SCREENING RESULTS OF HOUSEHOLDS

	N	Per Cent
Total Sample	4488	100.0
Eligible Households	2294	95.7
Ineligible Households	1816	
Refusals	37	0.9
Non-contacts	52	1.2
Vacant	193	. . .
Other*	96	2.2

*Includes: language barrier; unavailable due to illness, vacation, etc.; listing error; housing construction or demolition.

TABLE 4

FINAL DISPOSITIONS OF SAMPLE

Eligibles	Married	Not Married	Total	Per Cent
Completed Interviews	635	361	996	71.9[a]
Refusals	156	78	234	16.9[a]
Noncontacts	43	41	84	6.1
Unavailable (illness, language, etc.)	15	8	23	1.6
Moved, unable to locate	18	28	46	3.3
Other	1	2	3	0.2
Total Eligible	868	518	1,386	100.0
Ineligibles				
Due to Age	51	57	108	
Moved out of Chicago Consolidated Area	7	10	17	
Other	1	3	4	
Total Ineligible	59	70	129	
Total Sample[b]	927	588	1,515	

[a]The formula for the calculation of the disposition rates are:

$$\text{Response Rate} = \frac{\text{Completed Interviews}}{\text{Total Eligibles}}$$

$$\text{Refusal Rate} = \frac{\text{Refusals}}{\text{Total Eligibles}}$$

[b]These figures reflect changes in marital status information from the time of screening to the completion of interviewing. During this time period 49 respondents changed marital status: 30 married respondents had a final disposition of not married and 19 not marrieds changed to married.

The two other weights are necessary because households from three census tracts were inadvertently subsampled. The initial measure of the size of these selected census tracts was drastically underestimated, and as a result, these areas were subsampled at a rate of 25 per cent. Consequently, all completed interviews from census tracts 811 (Chicago city), 8255 (Chicago suburb), and 209 (Indiana) have received a weight factor of four in the data set. The data set weights are as follows:

Group	Weight
1. Not Married Rs from tracts other than 811, 8255 and 209	1
2. Married Rs not from tracts 811, 8255 and 209	2
3. Not Married Rs from tracts 811, 8255 and 209	4
4. Married Rs from tracts 811, 8255 and 209	8

The total weighted sample represents 1877 cases and the findings in this research are based solely on the weighted sample data.

Sampling error estimates for this study were derived from a computer program developed by Shah (1974). Following the recommendation of the Bureau of the Census (Gonzalez, et. al., 1975), sampling errors were computed on a subset of the variables from the total data file. Sixty-six variables were selected based on the following criteria: importance in the analysis, different variance estimates, and varying sample sizes. Based on the weighted sample data, the estimates of sampling errors at the 95 per cent level of confidence are shown in Appendix I.

The women interviewers who collected this data received various degrees of training and instruction. New interviewers received two days of general interviewing plus two specific days of training on the research

instrument. Experienced interviewers received two days of specific training with the instrument. All interviewers received specific instructions on how to ask each question, and to administer the interview in the order the questions appear. This procedure was designed to reduce the potential for interviewer bias and insure that comparable data was collected from each respondent. The interview itself was a structured, precoded survey containing 161 questions followed by a short self-administered form containing 30 items. Each interview took approximately an hour and a half to two hours to complete.

The conceptual framework of the interview was developed by Helena Z. Lopata and Kathleen F. Norr of the Center for the Comparative Study of Social Roles, Loyola University of Chicago. The Framework concentrates on measuring the construction of reality as well as behavioral and attitudinal features of various social roles occupied by middle-aged women. The original study was designed to explore the different role involvements, role conflicts and role strains associated with a woman's occupational role including that of housewife. The focus was on their current situation, but a significant portion of the interview explores their past behavior and future plans. A major goal of the original study was to measure role involvements during different stages of the life course and eventually produce a scale for measuring the construction of reality based on what the respondent believes to be true of the world, "women," role structures (particularly the occupational structure), the specific occupations she has considered entering and has entered, the attitudes of significant others towards her and her roles, and her self.

The major components of the interview focus on five aspects of the changing commitments of women to work and family roles:

Perceptions, values and sentiments held by women including their relative commitment to the main roles in which they are currently involved, have been involved, or plan to be involved in.

Actual behavior with respect to the world of work and the relation of that behavior to participation in other social roles.

Self-images of women and the factors affecting their content and relative strength.

Life plans and future expectations, including continuities and changes of involvement in various roles, voluntary or enforced.

Knowledge and beliefs about the role of society, in particular governmental agencies like the Social Security Administration.

The interview incorporates these aspects of the study by organizing the question around areas of the respondents lives. The instrument itself was composed of 21 areas and followed the topical order listed below:

A. Overall evaluation of social roles women perform at different stages of the life course

B. Perceptions of social reality affecting women and work, and knowledge and beliefs held about female-male differences

C. Educational history

D. Employment history

E. Job training history

F. Occupational history, including first job, longest job, last or current job, and best job

G. Measure of career commitment

H. Measures of the complexity of the job search

I. Evaluation of working conditions and job satisfaction by currently employed women; identification with occupational group and unions

J. Comparison of her job to the average job

K. Current work involvement for non-employed women; justification for not working, contemplation of going

back to work, and connecting ties to past employment

L. Mothering history

M. Household composition and management

N. Perceived role conflicts and strains based on
    advantages of staying home full-time and of being
    employed full-time

O. Marital history

P. Husband's educational and occupational background
    (if married more than once, former husband's back-
    ground)

Q. Husband's attitudes (as perceived by respondent towards
    her employment)

R. Knowledge and attitudes about Social Security

S. General life history background including information
    on parents, siblings, place of residence, and religious,
    racial and ethnic identification.

T. Finances and financial management

U. Self-administered Questionnaire to measure the woman's
    self-images, feelings of competence and strength, and
    perceived characteristics

The survey data available for this research is not necessarily

limited by those factors that traditionally limit the utility of second-

ary analysis, i.e., those in which the researcher is constrained by the

questions she or he can ask because of the limitations of the data.

Rather, this research instrument was designed for eventual cohort analysis

of the kind performed here. For each respondent, retrospective life

histories were constructed along four dimensions: education, paid employ-

ment, marriage and mothering. So, although the data would be considered

cross-sectional because it was collected at one point in time, the

reconstructed life histories can be viewed as forming a synthetic longi-

tudinal data set that allows for comparison of behavior for successive

cohorts.

Variable Construction and Measurement

From the beginning of the data collection process and throughout the data reduction process, specific attention was paid to the construction of a life history data file. The life history file was constructed as a synthetic longitudinal data set based on the recall of the respondents. One limitation of this kind of methodology is the necessity of relying upon the woman's memories of past events rather than of measurements made near to or at the time of the selected events. Every effort was made, through extensive question testing and interviewer training, to make it as easy as possible for the respondents to remember their past behavior in orderly and logically connected sequences. Despite these efforts, it is inevitable that some women incorrectly reported some information due to forgetfulness or selective recall. These individual inaccuracies probably balance out in the aggregate, but there is no specifically designed way to assess their seriousness. Confidence in the data has been increased, however, by the fact that in the initial analyses of the data (Norr, Miller, and Lopata, 1979) the patterns of change that have been observed in this sample have been matched by similar patterns using census cohorts and cross-sectional analyses.

As previously mentioned, a substantial portion of the interview focused on the women's educational, employment, marital and mothering histories. The life history file consists of four corresponding sets of variables derived from these sections of the interview. Each section of these separate histories was designed to measure the timing, sequencing, and duration of the multiple role involvements. For the educational histories, respondents were first asked how old they were when they first stopped going to school full-time. They were also asked what was the

highest grade they completed at that time, the highest degree or diploma they had, and the main reason they stopped going to school at that time. Then a series of questions were asked if the respondent ever returned to school on either a full- or part-time basis. For each return, up to four returns, the women were asked the year they had returned to school, whether it was full-time or part-time, and what was the main reason they stopped going to school after ending that return. These educational returnees were then asked again the highest grade they had received altogether and the highest degree or diploma they had received. Verbatim responses were recorded in response to their being asked what kind of job did this assitional school prepared them for. All respondents, whether they returned to school or not since their first stop of full-time schooling, were asked their future educational plans. Specifically, if they answered that they planned to return, they were asked within how many years they planned to return, whether it will be their major activity at that time, if they will be working towards a specific degree, and the highest grade of schooling they plan to complete. Given this reconstruction of their educational histories, for each year that the respondent was 16 years or older, her educational status was determined and coded as either full-time, part-time or not in school.

Following the educational history section of the interview, the respondents were asked to reconstruct their employment histories based on their entries into and exits from the labor force for up to five separate employment periods. They were asked in what year they had begun each employment period; for their first employment period they were asked if this was in the same year they first stopped going to school full-time. If they began work in a different year, they were asked what they did

between first stopping school full-time and starting their first employment period. They were asked for each employment period how many hours they worked at all jobs, how many employers they had for that paid work experience, how many jobs or positions they held during that time, and when they made a major work change (stopping work, or increasing or decreasing their work by 10 hours or more per week). Also, each respondent was asked why she made this major work change. Those who stopped work but continued to look for a job were coded separately from those who stopped work because they decided that they no longer wanted to be employed. Verbatim responses of the respondent's reason for either stopping or increasing or decreasing her hours were recorded. Over seventy-five different reasons in all were given for making a major work change.

The future plans of the respondents were then asked. If the respondent was not currently employed, she was asked if she planned on being employed in the future, and if so, how many hours per week did she plan to work at all jobs, and within how many years did she plan this return. If the respondent was currently employed, she was asked if she was planning a major work change in the future and within how many years was she planning that change. Both groups of women were asked what they thought would be their main reason for this projected work change and their verbatim responses were recorded. Using these questions from the interview, it was possible to construct a set of variables that established whether the respondent was employed full-time, part-time or not employed for every year from the time she turned 16 until she was interviewed in 1977-1978.

Standard questions were used to obtain the marital histories. The

respondent was asked her current marital status, the year she was mar-
ried for her current marriage, and the number of times she had been
married before. For each previous marriage, up to four marriages, the
respondent was asked in what year she was married, in what year the
marriage ended, and whether that marriage ended in separation, divorce
or widowhood. The marital history file was constructed to code each
respondent as either married, divorced, widowed, separated or never
married for each year the respondent was age 16 and older. In addition,
a corresponding marital history file was created using the date of first
divorce (if any), and recorded whether the woman had ever been divorced
for each of the subsequent years.

The last history file constructed for this analysis was that of the
respondent's mothering history. The initial design of this file was
based on the woman's mothering responsibilities rather than her biological
parenting. Thus, women were asked about all the children they have
raised, including stepchildren. For each child, a year of birth was
obtained and, where relevant, the year he or she entered and/or left a
woman's household. Women were operationally defined as not active in
mothering responsibilities when they had no child living at home or when
the youngest child at home was at least 18 years old. In the mothering
history file, then, her mothering status is described in terms of one of
the following categories for every year since she had her first child;
youngest child under 3 years of age, youngest child 3 to 5 years of age,
youngest child 6 to 19 years of age, or no child less than 18 years of
age.

The above approach emphasizes the traditional approach in the
family cycle literature (Duvall, 1971; Hill, 1970) to organize analyses

of the family based on the age of the youngest child. While this is a valuable approach for studies related to changes in the family structure itself, the age of the parent provides more information about her or his relationship to the family structure than does the age of her or his child. Findings indicate that women who have their first birth in their late twenties or early thirties find adjustment to parenthood more diffi- cult that those women who timed their first birth in their early twenties (Daniels and Weingarten, 1981). In fact, Rossi (1980), in her study on the mearnings of age and aging for middle-aged women in relation to parenting, found that this is true for not only older women in relation to infants, but also true for older mothers with preschool and adolescent children. With this in mind, an alternative approach to the mothering history file was developed. Variables were constructed that identified the respondent's age at first birth and age at last birth and the number of years the respondent has spent in childbearing. For the analysis here, the age of the mother at first birth functions to locate the women in the role of parent at a certain stage of the life course as well as provide more information on how that role interacts with other mutually contigent careers that are making demands on her at the same time.

Presented thus far are the questions that have been used for build- ing a data file that describes each of the separate life histories over time. Figure 5 lists the major variables that were constructed from the life history files and that were also used in the construction of the life course patterns typology.[4] For employment, marital and mothering his- tories, timing variables based on age at entry and exit from each role were designed. Except for the exit from motherhood, the age at which a woman enters and exits the role of employee or wife is relatively straight-

FIGURE 5

LISTING OF MAJOR VARIABLES USED TO CONSTURCT THE LIFE COURSE PATTERNS TYPOLOGY

Employment History Variables

    Employment History--
      Continuous or Discontinuous Employment
    Age at Entry for Each Employment Period
    Age at Exit for Each Employment Period
    Duration of Years for Each Employment Period
    Length of Time between Each Employment Period

Marital History Variables

    Age at Each Marriage
    Age at End of Each Marriage
    How Each Marriage Ended
    Length of Each Marriage

Mothering History Variables

    Age at Birth of First Child
    Age at Birth of Last Child
    Number of Years Spent in Childbearing

Life Course Patterns Typology (based on cumulative life experience)

forward. For analysis of the span of the mothering role, years spent in childbearing was designated to replace departure from motherhood. For the original study, a woman was considered out of the active mothering role if she had no child living at home or when the youngest child was at least 18 years old. At the time of the interview, less than 10 per cent of the sample fell into this category. Consequently, years spent in childbearing were selected as a more meaningful measure in which to make true comparisons between the younger cohort and the older cohorts when they were age of the younger cohort. Variables measuring duration of employment periods and marriages were constructed as were variables that measure the length of time between each employment period and marriage.

The construction of the life course patterns typology has taken place in four separate stages. The first stage has been to construct a set of history patterns based on the reconstructed life histories. This includes charting the paid employment histories for those women who had discontinuous employment and for those women who have worked continuously since they first started paid work. The second state of constructing the life course patterns typology has been to chart the marital history patterns of the sample. As a significant departure from much of the literature in this area, never married women have been incorporated into the typology as well. The third stage has been the identification of the mothering histories. The last and final stage has been the actual construction of the typology itself. The three separate patterns that emerged from the employment, marital and mothering histories have been combined in a cumulative fashion to reflect their interrelationships. The original typology was constructed so as to group women based on the combined extent of their multiple histories without incorporating timing

and sequencing. For instance, women at the time of the interview who were still in their first employment period, not currently married, and had not yet had any children were grouped to represent a category of the typology. This category as described gives no indication as to the timing or ordering of life events. Clearly, further analyses are needed to further differentiate the experiences of the women in a more meaningful way. First, the sequencing of the different multiple histories has to be analyzed as suggested in Table 1. Then the timing of the multiple histories has to be added so that entries and exits at different stages of the life course can act to further differentiate one pattern from another. As an example of the revised typology that resulted from the analyses in Chapter V, two groups of women can have the same sequence of entry into employment, marriage, exit from employment, motherhood and reentry into employment. For the first group of women this sequence might have begun in their late teens whereas for the second group this sequence might have begun in their late twenties after the completion of advanced educational degrees. Consequently, they would not be grouped together because of the differences in timing of events during the middle years. In using the life course perspective, the most important focus is on the sequencing and timing of transitions between the stages of the life course as well as changes in sequencing and timing over and among different groups. The life course approach is less concerned with the fact that most women will experience a stage of employment or motherhood; but rather it is more concerned with when a woman's involvement with paid work and mothering begins and ends, and how these multiple involvements at different stages of the life course reflect social change.

A methodological problem that will often prevent true cohort com-

parisons is the fact that the younger women have not lived out as much of
their lives as the older women. How to incorporate and analyze the experi-
ence of the younger women has been resolved in part by the use of their
answers to their future plans. Where possible, the younger respondents'
answers to questions regarding their future employment plans, plans for
remarriage and plans for additional children have been utilized in pro-
jecting their future behavior. If it is clear that the youngest cohort
has not completed its transition into a certain life course event, such
as marriage, how this will effect the proportion or mean age for the
cohort will be specified.

Data Analysis

Cohort analysis of survey data, whether cross-sectional or longitu-
dinal, attempts to measure the different kinds of effects associated with
adult development and aging. Cohort-historical analysis, in particular,
represents a more historically grounded form of interpretation of these
effects. What follows is a brief discussion of how cohort analysis and
the cohort-historical approach will be used in this research on social
change.

Cohort analysis refers to any study that attempts to measure some
characteristic of one or more cohorts at two or more points in time.
Usually for this kind of analysis there is both cross-sectional and longitu-
dinal data involved where one can compare different cohorts at one point
in time as done in synchronic studies and compare characteristics of one
cohort for at least two separate points in time as done in panel or dia-
chronic studies. So there are both synchronic and diachronic comparisons
that can be made that give cohort analysis its unique analytic utility.
Since survey data provides the most frequent source for cohort analysis,

most cohort analyses are secondary analyses of sample survey data. As Glenn points out, "cohort analysis with survey sample data is still in its infancy" (1977: 68). Nevertheless, cohort analysis provides the information necessary to assess the amount of social change due to cohort succession.

When looking at a cohort table, Palmore (1978) has identified three types of measurable differences: longitudinal differences, cross-sectional differences, and time-lag differences. For longitudinal differences one has measurements for the early and later points for the same cohort. Thus, longitudinal differences are measured by subtracting the later cell from the early cell. Cross-sectional differences are measured by subtracting the younger cohort cell from the older cohort cell at one point in time. And finally, there are time-lag differences which compare "the older cohort at the earlier measurements and the younger cohort at the later measurement who have become the same age as the older cohort was at the earlier measurement" (1978: 284).

Palmore has argued that much of the confusion surrounding cohort analysis is the inability of those who use the technique to distinguish between three levels of analysis: first, the observable differences (as described above), second, the three inferred effects, and third, possible causes of these effects. Palmore believes that once you have calculated the observable differences you can begin to separate the inferred effects of age, period and cohort. There are other kinds of effects such as effects of sampling error and of compositional changes in the aging cohorts, but age, period and cohort effects are each produced by separate influences. Age effects are associated with aging while cohort effects are associated with birth cohort membership, and period effects are

produced by influences associated with each period of time (Glenn, 1977). To be even more explicit, all three effects have some imputed "causes." Age effects can be produced by biological, psychological causes, and/or social role changes. Period effects can be caused by changes in physical or social environments and changes in group composition. And finally, cohort effects may be caused by the interaction of the historical situation with the age of the cohorts or differences in size or structure of cohorts, and so on (Palmore, 1978). Obviously, age, period, and cohort effects cannot be observed directly but can be inferred. There is no straightforward way of identifying these effects because of the confounding of these three effects regardless of how a cohort table is examined. It should be mentioned that this is an ongoing controversy among researchers who use cohort analysis. Glenn (1977) does not believe that effects can be "unconfounded" through statistical analysis. Palmore (1978), in contrast, believes that by using specified conditions and certain assumptions, it is possible to separate and estimate the value of the three effects. The causes of the imputed effects must be theoretically grounded and require information from outside the cohort table.

As Riley, Johnson and Foner (1972) state, the specific advantage of cohort analysis is its ability to simultaneously examine life course differences and cohort differences. The focus of cohort analysis within the age stratification model is the concept of cohort timing; this is in contrast to period analysis which focuses on the concept of societal timing. In this cohort analysis the goal is to describe how cohort and life course processes relate to the age structure at a given time period, and how they relate to structural change over successive time periods.

The first step, then, in cohort analysis is to identify observable

differences in cohort and life course processes. But in answering the question how do cohorts age in different ways and how do they contribute to social change, the researcher must turn to the analysis of effects already mentioned. Life course differences and cohort differences are observed in the data, but the effects are the postulated tendencies presumed to underlie the observed patterns. The observed differences that are explained through the identification of effects direct the focus to theoretical explanations. The emphasis of the empirical study will be on measuring life course differences and cohort differences, and examining the imputed age and cohort effects on these differences. Cohort analysis focuses on age and cohort effects, but there always exists the potentially confounding effects of period. Throughout the chapters to follow, cross-tabular analysis will be used to describe the life course differences and cohort differences found in the data. Separation of effects is not a major methodological goal of this research, but in analyzing the data the possible confounding of effects will be taken into consideration.

Much of the work on social change using cohort tables must be done in conjunction with theoretical frameworks and evidence from outside the cohort table. In the context of the cohort-historical approach, this means a further examination of those posited cohort effects as they impinge on successive cohorts at similar points in the life course. Cohorts are distinguished by their unique historical background, size, composition, and exposure to environmental factors. The varying experiences of birth cohorts of middle-age women reflect this historical diversity. Interpretations will be presented that will attempt to link historical change to life course patterns. This attempt at linking historical change and life course patterns will be made through the specific examination of historical

factors that relate to shifting demographic trends, age normative expectations and ideological influences.

CHAPTER III

Footnotes

[1] For more details on this data set and related methodological issues, see Helena Z. Lopata and Kathleen F. Norr, "Changing Commitments of Women to Work and Family Roles and Their Future Consequences for Social Security, Final Report to the Social Security Administration, 1979, 600-75-0190.

[2] From a random sample of 100 census tracts (1970 population), the correlation between total population and women 25-54 was .975. Since 1975 estimates of the population were available from the Chicago Area Geographic Information Survey, they were utilized as the measure of size.

[3] The Probabilities of Selection were computed as follows:

$$P_{overall} = \frac{\text{Expected number of sample households}}{\text{Total estimated number of households}} = \frac{4,400}{2,574,370} = .001709$$

$$P_{married} = \frac{927}{1,841} \times .001709 = .00086$$

$$P_{not\ married} = \frac{577}{577} \times .0001709 = .0001709.$$

[4] In the final analysis, the educational history variables were not used in the construction of the life course patterns typology. These variables are discussed in Chapter IV. Since 57 per cent of the sample did not experience an educational return once they departed from full-time school, a methodological choice was made not to include education in the original version of the typology.

CHAPTER IV

COHORT DIFFERENCES AND SIMILARITIES:

THE EDUCATIONAL, EMPLOYMENT, MARITAL AND MOTHERING

HISTORIES OF CHICAGO AREA WOMEN

In the research plan presented in Chapter II, four life history dimensions were identified: education, employment, marriage and mothering. Prior to the analysis of the life course patterns typology itself, analyses were performed on each of the individual role involvements. It is necessary to examine the life course differences within a cohort (Ld), cohort differences across successive cohorts (Cd), period differences (Pd), and age-strata or cross-sectional differences (Sd) for each individual career. In order to understand the nature of the typology and and the interrelationships of each of the separate histories. Based on the analysis of each role history, certain methodological choices were made to combine these separate role involvements into a typology. These findings are presented in fuller detail in the following chapter. The analyses in this chapter represent the foundation for the extended analyses of the typology constructed in Chapter V. Each life history will be examined separately in this chapter including intra-cohort and inter-cohort variations, modal patterns of behavior based on the entries and exits of each role involvement, the timing of these entries and exits, and cumulative role involvement by selected characteristics of the sample.

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Educational History Patterns

The notion of formal education as an activity confined to the early stages of the life course is a view that is increasingly inappropriate for the study of women and the education process (Davis and Bumpass, 1976; Rindfuss and Bumpass, 1979; VanDusen and Sheldon, 1976). However, once a woman first left school after having attended full-time, due to either domestic responsibities or paid employment commitments, she was unlikely to return to school later in life. Today, not only do women return to school, but there are a variety of entry and exit patterns that they follow.

Cross-Sectional Evidence of Changing Educational Patterns

The variety of educational history patterns among women is, in part, the result of a number of long term educational trends in American society. One major trend has been the increased school enrollment of the population overall and at older ages especially. In 1900, educational enrollment in the United States was 17.2 million; in 1975 enrollment had increased to 59.1 million. In October, 1976, 1.6 million persons 35 years and over were enrolled in school. Of this 1.6 million, 60 per cent were women, the majority of whom were in college part-time. Surprisingly, the largest proportion of women in school were those 50 years and over; they comprised 31 per cent of all women aged 35 and over who were attending school in October, 1976(Young, 1977). The female returnee, then, is typically a woman well into her middle years who is taking advantage of the increased availability of educational resources. The educational system, originally designed for continuous involvement in the early years of the life course, is starting to respond to people and their educational involvement at all stages of

the life course (Best and Stern, 1976).

Another major trend has been the steady rise in educational attainment for the United States population as a whole, and women in particular. This increase in educational attainment is reflected in the increase in median years of schooling completed by persons 25 years and over. The median years of school completed in 1940, for this age group as a whole, was 8.6; by 1975 the median years completed had increased to 12.3. In 1975, the median years completed for women 25 to 34 was 12.6; for women 35 to 54, the median school years completed was 12.4; and it was substantially lower for women 55 and over at 10.9 years. Clearly, American women, especially younger ones, are becoming increasingly better educated since the middle of the century (U. S. Bureau of the Census, 1976).

Research on other cross-sectional education patterns has had a number of additional foci: the relationship between fertility and education, the effects of age at first marriage and marriage in general on education, the continuation of education after marriage, and sex differences in educational attainment as it relates to status attainment. Despite these different emphases in the literature, there still appear to be gaps in our knowledge regarding educational history patterns and factors that effect variation in those patterns. Studies on education and fertility tend to focus on married women and early fertility preferences with little investigation of these effects on educational involvement in the middle years (Rindfuss and Bumpass, 1979). Studies on age at first marriage and the continuation of education after marriage focus on married women, with little or no

attention paid to never married, separated, divorced or widowed women
(Davis and Bumpass, 1976). Little attention has also been paid to the
female educational attainment process or sex differences in the
educational attainment process (Marini, 1978). An identification of
the different educational histories of women, both single and married,
would appear to make a contribution toward filling these gaps.

Defining Discontinuity

Continuity and discontinuity are concepts used to describe role
involvement that women have through their middle years, including
the educational attainment process. Discontinuity can occur, with
respect to education, as a disruption while in school to complete
a degree or as a delay between the completion of one degree and the
start of another. A decrystallization of educational involvement has
recently emerged, involving a variety of discontinuous schooling
patterns among women. The operational definition of discontinuity
in role involvements has been taken from Featherman and Carter's (1976)
study of the impact of discontinuity in schooling on the socio-
economic life cycle of a cohort of Michigan males. They defined
discontinuity as "the timing of those events within the experience
of a birth cohort that differentiates the otherwise homogeneous
histories of its individual members (1976: 3)." Their definition of
discontinuity has important implications for this study because of
its emphasis on the timing of events. The notion that timing of select-
ed life events can identify intracohort variations is common to most
life course analyses. What is unique to this conceptualization of
discontinuity is that timing differences are a function of intermittent

role involvements at selected life stages. Discontinuity means that role involvements can be stopped and started over time. Age stratification theory would suggest that through the articulating processes of allocation and socialization people are continuously involved with given roles at selected ages. Certain roles will dominate in one period of the life course and virtually disappear at a different stage. Typically, once a role involvement has started, individuals remain continuously involved until they decide to leave the role or replace it with another more important role assignment. But with certain roles, such as student and employee, involvement is not necessarily continuous but can be recurring due to successive disruptions. Discontinuity, then can create timing differences for the experiences of a cohort; but it also reflects how individuals may more than once move in and out of a role involvement in such a fashion so as to repeatedly make choices about their entrance into and departure from that role. Most often these repeated returns and departures from a role occur during middle age as women attempt to balance and co-ordinate multiple role involvements.

Three patterns of discontinuity in education have been measured in this discussion. The first possible type of discontinuity was considered any disruption of elementary or high school education prior to completion of the high school degree. This definition was dictated, in part, by the fact that the only information available was on the repondent's grade at first interruption and her grade level of completed education after all returns.[1] Her grade level for any single interruption delay or return other than her first and last was not asked in the interview. The second type of discontinuity

was that of women who experienced a delay between finishing high school and starting college. The final category represents those women who had some college or a college degree when they first stopped full-time schooling. This third form of discontinuity includes an interruption during college, a delay between the completion of college and the start of a graduate level degree, or an interruption in graduate work. For the purposes of this research, continuous schooling is viewed as uninterrupted schooling. This means once the woman stopped going to school full-time she never returned.

The level of educational attainment for the entire sample since it first stopped going to school full-time was distributed as follows: 22 per cent had not completed high school, 43 per cent were high school graduates when they first stopped, 17 per cent had some college and 15 per cent had a college degree and/or some graduate school. Applying these categories of educational attainment to the framework of discontinuity in schooling, the 22 per cent who had not completed high school provide the possible pool of cases who could experience a high school interruption if they eventually returned to school. Similarly, the 43 per cent who were high school graduates at the time they first left full-time school provide the possible pool of women who could experience a delay between finishing high school and starting college. And finally, the 34 per cent who had some college or a college degree when they first stopped are those who could experience an interruption of their post high school education if they did return to school at some time to either complete college or pursue a graduate school degree. It should be observed, then, that only women who returned to school for at least one year

after they stopped going full-time are considered to have discon-
                    2
tinuous schooling.

Table 5 shows the educational attainment of women when they
first stopped going to school full-time. These figures represent
the final level of educational achievement for those women with con-
tinuous schooling. For respondents with discontinuous schooling
these figures represent their level of educational achievement at
their interruption. Women who stopped and never returned were
57 per cent of the sample (N=1062); the remaining 43 per cent (N=805)
of the sample experienced some kind of educational discontinuity.
The categories in Table 5, for the total sample and each of the ten
year cohort groups, represent the three types of discontinuity:
disruption during elementary or high shool, delay beween high school
graduation and the start of post secondary schooling, and an in-
terruption during college. It appears that the women with continuous
schooling achieved less schooling overall than those with dis-
continuous schooling. More women with continuous schooling stopped
during elementary or high school education than those who returned
(25 per cent to 18 per cent); inversely, a far greater proportion
of women with discontinuous schooling had some college or more before
leaving school full-time than those women who never returned (45 per
cent to 27 per cent).

The differences in educational attainment between those women
with discontinuous schooling and those with continuous schooling are
apparent in a number of ways. The differences between the two groups
are mirrored when the groups are broken down into ten year birth
cohorts and studied for intercohort variations. It can be: seen from

TABLE 5

EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT WHEN FIRST STOPPED FULL-TIME SCHOOLING FOR BIRTH COHORTS
OF CHICAGO AREA WOMEN*

Educational Attainment When First Stopped School Full Time	All Women	Women who Never Returned to School	Women who Returned to School
All Ages			
Less than High School	22	25	18
High School Graduate	43	48	36
More than High School**	34	27	45
(N)	(1877)	(1062)	(805)
Age 25-34 (1943-1952)			
Less than High School	14	15	14
High School Graduate	41	48	32
More than High School	45	37	54
(N)	(843)	(468)	(385)
Age 35-44 (1933-1942)			
Less than High School	26	31	21
High School Graduate	46	49	42
More than High School	27	20	37
(N)	(569)	(321)	(248)
Age 45-54 (1923-1932)			
Less than High School	32	36	25
High School Graduate	42	46	38
More than High School	26	18	37
(N)	(456)	(275)	(181)

*For women who never returned to school, these percentages represent their total level of educational attainment; for women with discontinuous schooling these percentages represent their level of educational attainment at their first interruption or delay.

**This category includes an interruption during college, a delay between the completion of college and the start of a graduate level degree, or an interruption in graduate work.

Table 5 for all three cohort groups the women who stopped their education at high school are the majority, nearly half for each group. The distribution of interruptions/delays shifts for discontinuous students so that for the youngest cohort, when they stopped at what is considered its first interruption, over half had some college or more. Though the proportion who stopped at college is not nearly as impressive for the two older cohorts as it is for the youngest cohort, these two groups still had nearly twice the proportion who first stopped with some college than their cohort counterparts who never returned. It appears for all cohorts that those women with discontinuous schooling went further in their education than those women who went continuously before stopping. Fewer first stopped at less than a high school diploma; more had some college or more before stopping.

Cohort Differences and Similarities in Education

On the basis of the educational histories reconstructed by each respondent, it is possible to present the proportion of women in school both full-time and part-time at certain ages for the entire sample and by pattern of schooling (Table 6). When comparing life course differences (based on longitudinal patterns) for each of the three birth cohorts, it is apparent that the youngest cohort is most unlike the other two cohorts based on proportion in school for ages 15-24 (63 per cent compared to 46 per cent and 48 per cent). However, when measuring for observable life course differences (Ld) (row percentages using Figure 4B of Chapter II) each cohort has approximately the same observable differences from life course stage to life course stage.

Educational involvement decreases dramatically from ages 15-24 to 25-34 for each cohort's life course pattern. The trend is reversed after ages 24-35, with _increased_ educational involvement between the ages of 24-35 and 35-44. This clearly reflects the increased participation on the part of middle aged women who have returned to school. There are no observable differences from one cohort to the next when comparing for cohort differences (Cd) based on life course participation because of their matched patterns of behavior from one life course stage to the next. The life course differences that are observed here indicate the similarity of aggregate longitudinal behavior for all three cohorts with respect to education.

The obervable differences in education are most apparent when looking for period (Pd) and age-strata (Sd) differences. Here the contrast between the youngest and older cohorts is most pronounced for both the sample as a whole and for each pattern of schooling. The period differences (column percentages) at ages 15-24 and 25-34 reflect the increased proportion of younger women in school at those ages (Pd are approximately 14 or 15 per cent between the oldest and youngest cohorts at both age ranges). The tendency in the cross-sectional data (diagonal percentages) shows, as one would expect based on the historical patterns of departure from school, the youngest women had the largest proportion in school at any one point in time. Currently there are twice as many younger women in school than older women, with the middle cohort displaying a transitional degree of involvement with respect to education (19 per cent to 13 per cent to 7 per cent). This historical transition of increased educational involvement beyond the completion

of full-time schooling can be further viewed by comparing the dia-
gonals for 1957 and 1967. The difference in educational involvement
for women 15-24 and 25-34 in 1957 and 1967 are respectively 41 per
cent and 55 per cent. One might have predicted the reverse in
which the per cent difference decreased rather than increased in
the later time period. But instead this demonstrates the previously
identified shift in longitudinal educational behavior whereby women
are most likely to reduce and/or stop their educational involvement
most during their late twenties and early thirties and return only in
their late thirties and early forties. Also given the most recent
pattern of staying in longer before leaving full-time schooling,
the age strata difference is greater in 1967 because of the changing
behavior of the youngest cohort in contrast to the more constant
behavior of the middle cohort.

The proportion of women in school with at least one educational
return, as shown in Table 6, further emphasizes the observable
differences in life course differences and period differences for
the sample. Age-strata differences appear less significant. The
decrease in involvement from ages 15-24 to 25-34 is apparent for
all three cohorts, but strongest for the middle cohort (42 per cent
difference). The cohort differences between the middle and oldest
cohort remain equally strong for both age ranges, despite the cor-
responding longitudinal behavior of the two groups. The greatest
change in behavior for the middle cohort suggest their role as
the transitional group who attempted first to integrate the student
role into their lives during adulthood.

TABLE 6

PROPORTION OF WOMEN IN SCHOOL FULL-TIME AND PART-TIME BY
DIFFERENT EDUCATIONAL PATTERNS AT SELECTED AGES
FOR BIRTH COHORTS OF CHICAGO AREA WOMEN

	All Women				
	Per Cent in School at Age:				
	15-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	N
Current Age:					
25-34 (1943-1952)	63	19 ·			(844)
35-44 (1933-1942)	46	8	13		(571)
45-54 (1923-1932)	48	5	8	7	(459)
	Women with at Least One Educational Return				
	Per Cent in School at Age:				
Current Age:					
25-34 (1943-1952)	71	40			(375)
35-44 (1933-1942)	60	18	30		(248)
45-54 (1923-1932)	32	11	18	17	(181)
	Women with No Educational Returns				
	Per Cent in School at Age:				
Current Age:					
25-34 (1932-1952)	56	2			(468)
35-44 (1933-1942)	36	0	0		(321)
45-54 (1923-1932)	39	0	0	0	(278)

The most striking differences for women with discontinuous schooling are the period differences for all three selected age ranges. Comparing all three cohorts when they were aged 15-24 reveals the similarity of the youngest and middle cohorts in comparison to the oldest cohort. This pattern shifts when the cohorts were all aged 25-34, as the middle cohort appears to be more similar to the oldest cohort in educational involvement for this life course stage. One possible reason for this, and discussed more fully later, is the pattern of discontinuity each cohort was most likely to experience. Women in older cohorts returning at a younger age were more likely to have experienced a disruption during their precollege schooling or delayed the return to school after completing high school. It is more likely that the older women returning at a later age experienced a disruption during college and had returned in order to take college courses or start an advanced degree.

For those who were continuously enrolled in school and never returned after leaving full-time education, life course differences and period differences again seem most significant. For those women who never returned since leaving school full-time, a greater proportion of women in the youngest cohort were in school at ages 15-24 (56 per cent) than women now 45-54 were at that same age (39 per cent). By the time all the cohorts in the sample reached the ages of 25-34, the proportion in school continuously was two percent or less and from the ages of 35 and on, no one had been in school continously. The period difference between the youngest and two oldest cohorts is most apparent (56 per cent to 36 per cent and 39 per cent), and

matches the same findings for the sample as a whole as well as for

those with women who experienced discontinuous schooling. Life course

differences reflect the already noted trend of dramatic departure

from school between the ages of 15-24 and 25-34, the only cohort

difference found here demonstrates again the higher proportion of

educational involvement for younger women.

Palmore (1978) has argued that when two significant differences

are present, the effect that is common to both can be determined.

Although this is not a clear cut procedure that eliminates other

more complex possibilities, such as the prsence of two effects

that are present and cancel each other out, in the absence of other

evidence it can be argued that one effect is present. In this

case, period effect is common to both the observed period differences

and life course differences that have been discussed in relation

to education. The period effect that can best that can best interpret

these findings is related to the expansion and availability of education-

al resources.[3] Specific period effects contribute to the difference in

educational history patterns. The transitional behavior of the middle

cohort reflects the direction of increased educational attainment for

women over the last two decades and the availability of educational

resources directed at returning women students. In particular, the

effects of returning to school in order to complete a degree or start

college is a historical phenomenon that has gained acceptance as more

women are willing to balance mutiple role involvements during their

middle years, including the role of student.

Cumulative Educational Experience

The discussion thus far specifies cohort differences in education-

al attainment but does not identify actual patterns of entry and exit.

The women with discontinuous schooling patterns are those whose education

has extended into and through their middle years. For these women,

information is available for each of their returns since they first

stopped going full-time, up to four returns. Data for their age at each

return, whether it was full-time or part-time, and their age when they

interrupted that return are available. To understand the different

educational histories followed by different subgroups with discontinuous

schooling, Figure 6 plots the scheme of possible educational stops and

returns using the number of cases. There are four different tiers

in the scheme: the top tier represents the possible number of returns,

the second tier represents the possible number of stops (including

interruptions, delays and completions of a degree), the third tier

identifies those who have not returned since they left each respective

return, and the fourth level represents those women who continued in

school once they returned. In this diagram, all three types of dis-

continuity are collapsed together for the sake of presentation. Cases

are used to facilitate charting the possible route of stops and returns

at different points along the way. As mentioned earlier, 43 per cent

of the women have returned to school since first stopping full-time; for

the sample that represents 805 cases and it is their educational histor-

ies which are charted in this scheme.

In conjunction with Figure 6, Table 7 shows the distribution of

FIGURE 6

SCHEME OF EDUCATIONAL HISTORIES OF CHICAGO AREA WOMEN[a]

KEY
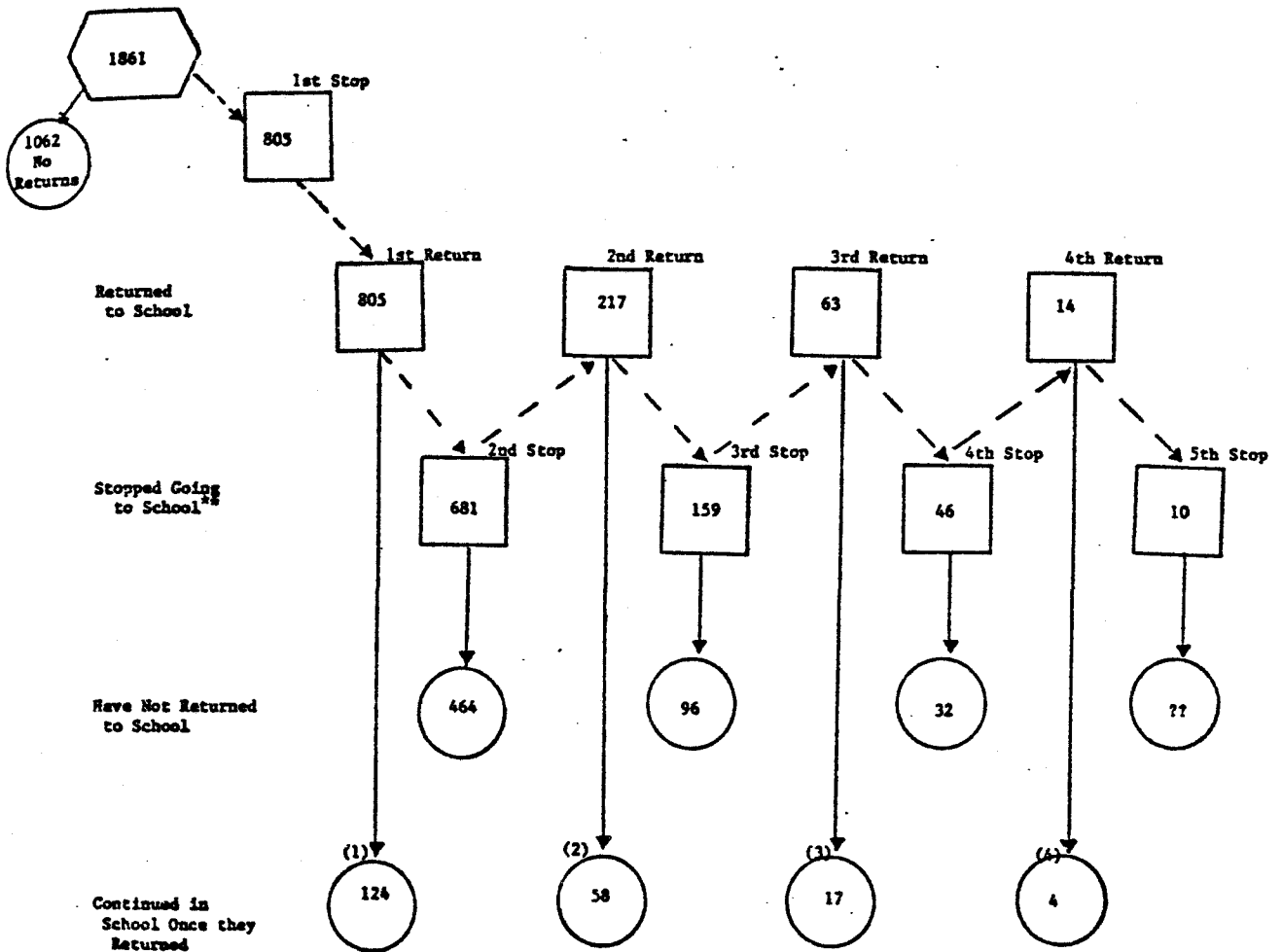
▢ Intermediate Points of Stops and Returns for Educational Histories

◯ Educational History after Stops and Returns

— — — ➤ Leading to Intermediate Points of Stops and Returns

————➤ Leading to Final Educational History

[**]Stopped School can either be an interruption, delay or completion of a degree
[a]Numbers in cells represent weighted cases

returns and stops for each educational return of the 805 women who
returned to school at least once; 681 (or 85 per cent) stopped going
to school at some point while 124 (or 15 per cent) continued in school
once they returned. For these 124 women, this was their current educa-
tional history status at the time of the interview. The 681 women who
stopped after this first educational return provide the pool of cases
that could return to school for a second time. Of the 681 women who
stopped, 464 (or 68 percent) never returned for additional schooling;
this represnets their current educational history status. The remain-
ing 217 women (32 per cent) who ended their first educational return
went on for a second educational return. Of these 217 cases (or 12 per
cent of the entire sample) who made a second return, 58 (or 27 per
cent) have not continued while 159 (73 per cent) went on to experience
a third educational interruption or delay. In Figure 6, the women with
third and fourth returns represent a very small percentage of the total
sample. Only 63 women (three per cent) had a third return to school
and only 14 women (one per cent) had a fourth return.

The scheme of educational stops and returns charted in Figure
6 does not depict life course patterns per se. Rather, it follows
the exit and entry routes for an aggregate of women over a period of
time and determines where they eventually ended up with respect to their
individual involvement. Table 7 reflects the similarity of cohort ex-
periences in terms of educational histories. The modal pattern of edu-
cational involvement for all three cohorts is to be currently out of
school after one educational return. One might predict greater varia-
tion between the youngest and oldest cohorts, since the oldest cohort
has lived longer with more time to experience more educational stops

TABLE 7

EDUCATIONAL HISTORIES FOR BIRTH COHORTS OF CHICAGO AREA WOMEN

| | | | Birth Cohorts: | | |
| | | | 25-34 | 35-44 | 45-54 |
Educational History:	All Women	(N)	(1943-1952)	(1933-1942)	(1923-1932)
Never Returned to School after Stopping Full-time	57	(1066)	56	57	61
In 1st Return to School	7	(124)	9	6	3
Ended 1st Return-- Did Not Return	25	(464)	26	25	22
In 2nd Return to School	3	(58)	2	2	2
Ended 2nd Return-- Did Not Return	5	(96)	3	6	7
In 3rd Return to School	1	(17)	1	2	1
Ended 3rd Return-- Did not Return	2	(32)	1	1	4
In 4th Return to School	0	(4)	--	1	--
Ended 4th Return		(10)			
(Total N)		(1871)	(841)	(566)	(451)

(Per Cent)

and starts than the rest of the sample. However, this was not the case since their first return to school started significantly later than the youngest cohort.

The differences in the mean level of educational attainment between women with continuous and discontinuous schooling reflects the tendency of the latter group to stay in school longer than the former before they stopped going to school full-time (Table 8). The total mean years of schooling for the entire sample was 12.4 years. For those who never returned it was 12.0 years compared to those with discontinuous school-ing who had after all returns 13.7 mean years of schooling. In the youngest cohort, women in both schooling patterns had some college before stopping. This was not true for the two older cohorts since the mean years of schooling was less than twelve years for both groups. Discontinuous students in the older cohorts stayed in for some college before stopping and after all returns gained at least one additional year of college. It appears that the difference in educational attain-ment between women with continuous versus discontinuous schooling, in particular for the two older cohorts, is the absence or presence for some college at the time they first stopped full-time school. This strongly suggests that when the women in the study returned to school, independent of age, it was not for the purpose of taking self-improve-ment or non-credit courses, but rather to earn a degree.

The differences in timing of educational entries and exits for women with different schooling patterns varies by their respective tendencies to complete either more or less schooling at the time they stopped full-time school, i.e. on the average continuous students end full-time school at age 19.6 while discontinuous students end full-time

TABLE 8

MEANS FOR SELECTED EDUCATIONAL CHARACTERISTICS FOR
BIRTH COHORTS OF CHICAGO AREA WOMEN

	All Women			25-34 (1943-1952)			35-44 (1933-1942)			45-54 (1923-1932)		
	Mean	Standard Deviation	(N)	Mean	Standard Deviation	(N)	Mean	Standard Deviation	(N)	Mean	Standard Deviation	(N)
Mean Years of Education for Women With:												
Continuous Schooling-- Never Returned	12.0	2.5	(1064)	12.8	2.2	(467)	11.7	2.3	(321)	11.2	2.7	(275)
Discontinuous Schooling at First Interruption	12.9	2.4	(804)	13.4	2.2	(375)	12.6	2.3	(248)	12.4	2.5	(181)
Discontinuous Schooling--After All Returns	13.7	2.4	(804)	14.1	2.2	(375)	13.5	2.5	(248)	13.5	2.5	(181)
Mean Age at Educational Entries and Exit:												
Continuous-- For Only Exit	19.6	2.7	(1064)	20.3	2.5	(468)	19.1	2.7	(321)	19.0	2.5	(275)
Discontuous-- For First Interruption	20.4	2.7	(804)	20.8	2.2	(375)	20.1	2.8	(248)	19.9	3.4	(181)
Discontinuous-- for First Return	26.1	6.8	(804)	24.1	3.5	(375)	27.4	7.1	(248)	28.4	9.6	(181)

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schooling for the first time at age 20.4. For the two oldest cohorts, nearly a year difference separates each group. For discontinuous students the mean age at their first return explains more the difference in behavior between the youngest and older cohorts: the former returned to school after 3.3 mean years, in the older cohorts their time out between their first exit and first return was 7.3 and 8.5 mean years.

The extended involvement of the youngest cohort in full-time schooling has influenced their age at entry into paid employment. Since they stayed in longer they, had the highest level of educational attainment. By contrast, the middle and older cohorts had more continuous educational involvement; women in these cohorts, when they did return, went back at later ages with the intention of completing high school or starting college. Continuity and discontinuity are important distinctions for the study of educational and, as will be shown, employment histories. Women with discontinuous schooling achieved less overall schooling than those with discontinuous schooling. By cohort, women with discontinuous schooling went further in their education than women with continuous schooling before stopping their educational involvement for the first time. Fewer stopped at less than a high school diploma; more had some college or more before stopping.

Employment History Patterns

It has become common knowledge that women in the United States
are entering the paid labor force in dramatic numbers. Some
researchers have argued that female movement into the paid labor
force constitutes a "subtle revolution" (Smith, 1979). In their
view, women's movement into the paid labor market has historical
origins that have not always been easily understood and are often
difficult to predict. In the past, American women usually worked
during the period between completing school and starting a family.
They tended to withdraw from work as they approached marriage or
the birth of their first child. Their subsequent return to the
labor force might occur after their youngest child entered school,
or they might never return. These employment patterns no longer
describe the reality of female employment behavior over the past
fifteen years. During the past fifteen years, the most rapid
increases in female employment have been among women between the
ages of 20 and 34. So while female labor force participation levels
are higher than in the past for all stages of the life course, they
have risen most rapidly for married women with pre-school children.
The possible patterns of labor force entry and exit have diversified,
given the variety of employment experiences of middle-aged women
who are spending more total years in the labor force than ever
before.

The profile of the female labor force corresponds closely to
the total female population in terms of racial, familial, and age
characteristics. Currently employed women outnumber women who stay
home. More than 40 million women - just over one-half of the female

population over sixteen - work for pay   (Blau, 1978). In its

1975 Handbook on Women Workers, the United States Department of

Labor suggests at least two reasons for this increase in labor

force participation by married women and young mothers:

> The availability of jobs, particularly in the
> expanding service sector, undoubtedly attracted many
> married and other young women into the marketplace.
> It would also appear that generally good job opportunities
> for young married women, particularly in clerical,
> sales, and service fields, may have played a part in
> the decisions of many young couples to postpone the
> timing of their first child or to have fewer children.
> (1975: 713).

The labor force participation rates of women, especially of married

women and teenagers, are sensitive to the general level of economic

activity as reflected in the history of female labor force

participation rates.

Historical Evidence of Changing Labor Force Participation Patterns

The increase in the size and composition of the female work

force prior to World War II had been gradual relative to female

labor force activity following the war. Between 1900 and 1940,

the labor force participation rates of females age 14 and older rose

only from 20 per cent to 29 per cent (U.S. Department of Labor,

1975: 9). In the aftermath of the war, and with the swift growth

of the service sector of the economy, the labor force participation

rate of women age 16 and older went from 33 per cent in 1950 to 45

per cent in 1974. In June, 1980 the female labor force participation

rate had reached 51 per cent (U.S. Department of Labor, 1980: 4).

The overall growth pattern of female labor force participation hides

the more discreet patterns of participation occurring among selected

groups of females. Participation varies considerably among females

of different age groups and among females of different familial
and marital status.

By age, there have been marked changes in the labor force
participation rates. The pattern prior to World War II was that
as women reached the ages of 16-19 they took their first full-time
job at the end of high school. Rates for women in their twenties
declined considerably as women withdrew or were forced from the
labor force with the advent of marriage and children. This rate
of participation remained level even as children got older, pre-
sumably making it easier for mothers to enter into paid labor.
In this period, single women were the dominant group in the female
labor force (Grossman, 1979), and mothers, whatever the age of their
children, stayed at home.

During the 1940's, the rates for women 35 and over started to
climb as mothers with school age children took jobs. By the 1950's,
the rates for labor force participation among women 35 and over
nearly matched the rates for young single women in the 20 to 24
age range. In 1960, the rate for women 45 to 54 had risen to the
degree that it surpassed the participation rate of women 20 to 24.
The rate that year for the cohort 34 to 45 was only 1 per cent less
than for this younger cohort   (1975 Handbook on Women Workers,
1975: 12).

During the 1960's, a different pattern emerged in which the
sharpest increases in labor market activity were among women
aged 20 to 24 and aged 25 to 34. This trend continued on into the
1970's so that by mid-decade over three-fifths (61 per cent) of
the cohort aged 20-24 were in the paid work force. A corresponding

increase occured among women 25 to 34 in the second half of the

decade so that by 1979 nearly 64 per cent of this cohort were

employed   (U.S. Department of Labor, 1980).   For the women aged

35 to 44, only a slight rise occurred by mid 1970, this in part was

a result of the sharp rise in their labor force activity between

1940 and 1960 (1975 Handbook on Women Workers, 1975: 13).   This

increase in female labor force participation among mothers

with child care responsibilities has characterized the 1970's.   The

result has been, according to the U.S. Department of Labor a "more

continuous work history" (1980: 1) for women in their early middle

years.   Consequently, since World War II married women have overtaken

single women as the dominant group in female labor force.

Clearly there has been an overall upward trend in the labor

force participation rates of women since 1948.   There was a

consistent steady increase during the 1960's which accelerated even

more during the 1970's.   The older cohorts of the 1950's (45 to

64) accounted for the first rapid increase in female labor force

participation rates.   Not until the 1960's did women under 45

experience the rapid increases displayed by the older women.   Since

1970, the participation rate of women 25 to 34 rose 21 percentage

points while it increased 15 per cent for women 20 to 24 in the same

ten year period (U.S. Department of Labor, 1980: 1).   So, while

there has been this consistent rise in participation rates among

women, there has been considerable variation in age.

Factors that influence increased female labor force activity

and occupational distribution have received considerable attention

from both sociologists and economists.   But a problem in research on

female labor force involvement in both disciplines has been the emphasis on cross-sectional analyses and the substitution of cross-sectional findings for longitudinal findings (Bell, 1978; Blau, 1978). Women, to a much larger degree than men, move in and out of the labor force. However, most studies of female labor force participation say little about the life-time employment patterns of women or even of selected groups of women. The research on women's employment histories has been limited by the lack of longitudinal data sets necessary to analyze labor market involvement over time. Because of this deficiency in available data sets, labor market knowledge has been strong on aggregates but weak on long term behavior. Sociologists have only recently realized, as have economists, that labor force participation of women over the life course is the result of previous employment experiences as well as of the cumulative effect of other factors such as job mobility and values associated with work.

The need for a dynamic model that addresses the employment patterns of women over time is a major one for research in this area. The relationship between early employment experience and later labor force participation is one aspect of this model that requires particular attention. This first phase of a woman's paid working life is strongly related to later labor market experience; the incentive to engage in market work at any point in the life course is likely to be greater for women with more paid work experience than for those with less paid work experience (Blau, 1975).

Past Research on Female Employment Histories

The importance of the first labor market experience is critical to the understanding of life-time employment histories of women and therefore will be emphasized in the discussion to follow. Given the increasing labor force participation of women at all stages of the life course, there will be variation in the times when women enter and re-enter. Some women will work continuously, maintaining full-time employment throughout their lives. Other women will work continuously on a part-time basis, increasing and decreasing their hours in response to various factors. But what appears to be more likely than a pattern of continuous employment, as suggested by the Department of Labor, is a pattern of discontinuous employment with labor force withdrawl and re-entry throughout adulthood. Research documenting these employment history patterns is rather sparse; but, again this is at least in part, a function of the inadequacy of available data sets to explore this problem.

What studies currently exist on the employment history patterns of women are sparse and tend to be descriptive in nature, lacking explanatory power. Two studies, however, must be mentioned if only to point out how great the need is for further investigation in the area: Francine Blau's examination of the National Longitudinal Surveys[4] to study longitudinal patterns of female labor force participation and Christabel M. Young's study of work sequence of married Australian women.

The National Longitudinal Surveys (NLS) of Labor Market Experience is comprised of four birth cohorts of the U.S. civilian population. The two female cohorts selected when the study began in

1967 were middle-aged women aged 30 to 44 and young women aged 14

to 24. A four volume series of research papers on the older cohort

of women is currently available. In the last volume of this series,

titled Dual Careers, Blau has investigated the extent of market

involvement of this age group over time. Using retrospective work

histories and a series of interviews held between 1967 and 1974

she investigated the influence of previous work experiences on

current labor force status. She also examined the relationships

of respondents' entry and exit behavior to trends in national labor

force participation rates during the interview periods. Blau found

that participation in market work at one point in time (cross-

sectional observation) is strongly associated with intensity of

previous employment experiences. On the average, the group of

women in the sample employed at one point in time had a greater

proportion of years in the labor force prior to the time they were

interviewed. Regarding exit and entry rates, Blau found that for

the time periods she was investigating "exiters" from the labor force

usually had less prior employment experience than "stayers". Also,

"entrants" to the labor force had more work experience than those

who remained out of the labor force for this time period from 1967

to 1974.

Blau's work does not attempt to identify long term patterns for

her sample. Rather, she has investigated the patterns of exit and

entry for a selected time period without classifying possible

type of patterns. On the other hand Young (1978), in a study of

Australian women still in their first marriages, attempted to

identify the main work sequences of these women during the first three

stages of marriage. The three stages she identifies are the period before starting a family, the period in which pre-school children are present, and the period in which one or more children are in primary school. From these three possible stages, Young identified eight possible work sequences; the largest of which comprised those who did not work during any of the three stages (35 per cent). The second largest group was comprised of women who worked only during the first stage before starting a family (24 per cent). Young found, not unlike Blau, that the probability of working during the next stage of marriage was greater if the women had worked during the previous stage.

The problem with Young's work as well as those of Henretta and O'Rand (1980), Spitze (1978), Sweet (1973) and others is that they look only at married women[5]. In Young's case, she studied only women with their first marriages still intact. Consequently, the work experiences of women who have been divorced, widowed, or never married cannot be analyzed within the framework she has designed.

Conceptualizing Discontinuity in Labor Force Participation

In order to prepare a conceptual framework to explain the increasing diversity of female employment histories, consideration was given to how to strengthen the kinds of measures that have been mentioned to study initial and lifetime employment experiences. Both Blau and Young have emphasized the strong relationship between early work experience and later work experience. Therefore, investigation of types of early work experience can be predictive of later work experience.

The most frequent emphasis on early labor force involvement has

been with respect to the relationship between employment and fertility. But this approach has become inadequate as more women choose not to marry or not to have children, and as many women unexpectedly find themselves outside marriage through divorce, separation or widowhood. Therefore, the family life cycle model as a conceptual framework for charting labor force involvement of women is inadequate. The alternative approach selected here is to look at employment as a primary life course transition rather than as a function of family life cycle stage. Entrances and exits from the labor force need to be viewed as primary activities that take on a pattern of their own even as they interact with educational and familial transitions. This is especially true of initial paid work experiences, which typically follow the completion of educational goals. The construction of the life course typology in this work was based on the assumption that labor force entries and exits are critical life course transitions that take on a pattern of their own and are not necessarily derived from the familial responsibilities that women have.

Two features have been found to be essential in identifying patterns of initial employment and life-time employment: continuity in employment and length of first employment period. This first feature of continuity and discontinuity in labor force participation is adapted from the earlier discussion of Featherman and Carter's (1976) notion of discontinuity as the timing of events that differentiates the experiences of birth cohorts. Continuous labor force activity can be categorized as uninterrupted employment; once having entered the paid labor force the respondent never exits

although she may increase or decrease her hours, moving back and
forth, for instance, between full-time and part-time work.
Discontinuous employment is when a woman ends her first period of
labor force participation. A woman who has experienced discontinuous
employment has entered and exited the labor force, and most likely,
re-entered once again. Applying this to the women in the sample,
either the respondent worked continuously once she entered the labor
force for the first time and thus was employed at the time of the
interview, or at some point she stopped working and never returned for
up to four different employment periods. For the sample as a whole,
20 per cent have experienced a continuous employment pattern from the
time they first entered the labor force until they interviewed,
while 80 per cent have experienced a discontinuous employment
pattern of labor market entry and departure.

The second feature used for identifying employment history pattern
is length of initial employment period. The length of this initial
paid work period ranged from one to thirty-seven years. The mean
number or years for this first employment period was 6.63 years.
Because the length of the first employment period is important for
understanding later work experience, length of time was dichotomized
and combined with patterns of continuous or discontinuous employment.
Within the sample, 46 per cent of the women had a short-term first
employment period of four years or less; 54 per cent had a long-term
first employment period of five years or more. When short-term and
long-term periods of time were combined with continuous or discontin-
uous periods of employment, the largest group consisted of women with
short-term discontinuous employment (44 per cent). The second

largest group was made up of women with long-term discontinuous employment (35 per cent). The women who were short-term continuous workers were only two percent of the sample; these women were collapsed with long-term continuous workers, who were 18 per cent of the sample.

The distribution of continuous workers, short-term (four years or less) discontinuous workers, and long-term (five years or more) discontinuous workers within each cohort indicates some change in initial employment experiences. Short-term discontinuous workers were the largest group for the two younger cohorts 25-34 and 35-44 (46 per cent for the youngest cohort and 44 per cent for the middle cohort). For the oldest cohort, most of the women experienced long-term discontinuous employment (49 per cent). It is important to keep in mind that this pattern of long-term discontinuous employment for the oldest cohort represents their labor force activity at an earlier age since most of these women were in their first employment period during their late teens or early twenties. When discussing initial employment experience for each cohort, it is in most cases their employment behavior from age 15-25 that is being analyzed, not their current labor force activity.

Continuous workers are represented most among the youngest cohort. In the 25-34 cohort, 28 per cent were continuous workers. They constituted a larger proportion of their cohort than did continuous workers in either the middle cohort (18 per cent) or the oldest cohort (nine per cent). Given this significant trend among the youngest cohort to work continuously, the effect of age must be noted. The youngest cohort has not yet had the opportunity to live out as much of its life as the two older cohorts. Consequently, the capacity of this cohort to

have a high proportion of long-term discontinuous workers is limited.

Similarly, for the older cohorts, because they have lived longer, the likelihood of their staying in the labor force continuously is less due to childbearing interruptions or changes in work-related conditions and opportunities. Despite the effects of age, the youngest cohort is staying in longer during its first employment period than either of the two older cohorts. The proportion of continuous workers in this chort (28 per cent) nearly matches the proportion of long-term discontinuous workers (26 per cent) demonstrating their tendency to stay employed longer before leaving the labor force for the first time.

Cohort Differences and Similarities in Labor Force Participation

Continuity and discontinuity as well as length of initial employment are features that differentiate the life-time employment patterns of the women as well as the cumulative life experiences of the sample. Before incorporating these differentiating features into the revised typology based on the sequencing and timing of life course transitions, it is necessary to analyze the life course differences within each cohort (Ld) and data for intracohort differences (Cd). Table 9 shows the proportion of women employed for both the birth cohorts of the sampleand of teh U.S. female civilian population. Comparing the Chicago area women to the national population shows that the trends in proportion employed are virtually matched for each cohort at each age.[6] Looking separately at life course differences in employment for each cohort, it appears that they have their own particular longitudinal pattern. (This data is presented visually in Figure 7). There is a clear pattern of labor force employment for the oldest respondents in the study -- these women were employed least in the middle years (their

TABLE 9

PROPORTION OF WOMEN EMPLOYED FULL-TIME OR PART-TIME AT SELECTED
AGES FOR BIRTH COHORTS OF CHICAGO AREA WOMEN AND OF
THE U.S. FEMALE CIVILIAN POPULATION

Current Age	Chicago Area Women				
	Per Cent Employed at Age:				
	15-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	N
25-34 (1943-1952)	35	58			(821)
35-44 (1933-1942)	41	44	58		(519)
45-54 (1923-1932)	48	33	44	60	(442)
Current Age	U.S. Female Civilian Population[a]				
	Per Cent Employed at Age:				
	15-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	N[b]
25-34 (1943-1952)	-	59			-
35-44 (1933-1942)	-	42	60		-
45-54 (1923-1932)	-	35	48	56	-

[a]Source: U. S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics.
Recent Trends in Labor Force Participation Rates: A Chartbook. Report 609,
September 1980. Charts 21, 22 and 23.

[b]Data not available.

FIGURE 7

COHORT VIEW OF WOMEN EMPLOYED FULL-TIME AND PART-TIME FOR SELECTED
AGES OF BIRTH COHORTS OF CHICAGO AREA WOMEN
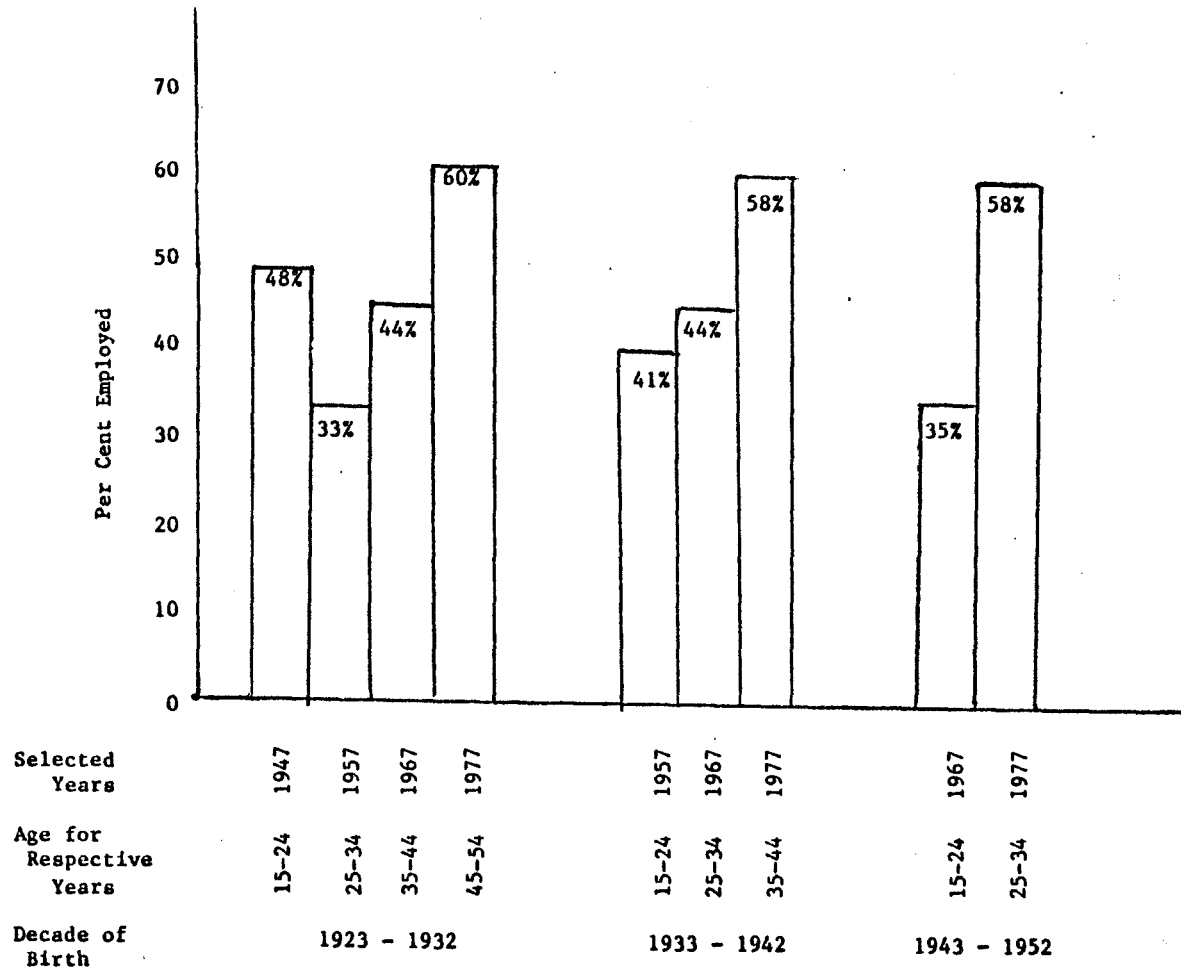
thirties). In contrast, the middle cohort did not experience this drop in employment during their middle years. As for the youngest cohort, the proportion who worked outside the home during this period is higher than for any other cohort, continuing the previously noted national trend of increased labor force participation of mothers with pre-school children. The greatest net shift in life course differences occurred among the youngest cohort who experienced a 23 percent increase in proportion employed from ages 15-24 and ages 25-34. The oldest cohort, in contrast, experienced a negative net shift of 15 percnet for the same age span. This cohort difference of 38 percent is matched only by the period difference for these two cohorts when they were both aged 25-34 (58 per cent to 33 per cent).

In comparison, age – strata differences, particularly at the time of the interview, do not reflect sharp cohort or period differences between the oldest and youngest cohort. The presence of these observable differences infers that period effects can most likely be attributed to changing employment patterns since life course differences as well as period differences are common to period effects (Palmore, 1978). Given the years when these cohorts were respectively 25 to 34 (1957 for the oldest cohort; 1977 for the youngest cohort) the trend of labor force withdrawal for the oldest cohort versus increased labor force participation for the youngest cohort is not surprising. The older group typifies the pattern of the 1950s when women in their twenties withdrew from paid work as they got married and had children. The younger group, in contrast, typifies a different pattern for women in their twenties as they maintained their labor market activity as young mothers with child care responsibilities.

The discussion just presented on inter-and intra cohort dif-
ferences reflects only the proportion of women who were employed at
selected ages across the life course. So while true cohort comparisons
have been made and the presence of period effects discussed, cumulative
employment experience cannot be derived from this discussion of observ-
able differences nor the identification of inferred effects. The em-
ployment history of each respondent was charted since the time she
turned 16 until the time of the interview in order to examine longitudinal
employment experience. Figure 8 presents schematically all possible
employment histories for the sample. The numbers in the square cells
represent the acutal cases that experienced each intermediate point of
labor force entry and exit, and each circular cell contains the number
of respondents with that employment history. Only two percent (44
cases) of the sample never worked and are not included in the scheme of
entries and exits. For each of five employment periods, a respondent
could move through one of these patterns: she could have worked conti-
nuously, ended an employment period and never returned, or ended an
employment period and eventually returned again. These three patterns
provide the basis for categorizing continuity and discontinuity in a
woman's employment history. In the first employment period, 370 women
(20 per cent) continued in the labor force once they entered. These
women are the continuous workers of the sample, while the remaining
1463 cases (80 per cent) are those women who experienced discontinuous
employment. In each employment period there are continuous workers
who, once they started that respective employment period, have remained
continuously in the labor force (the lowest row of circular cells in
the scheme), but they are considered discontinuous workers because they

FIGURE 8

SCHEME OF EMPLOYMENT HISTORIES OF CHICAGO AREA WOMEN[a]
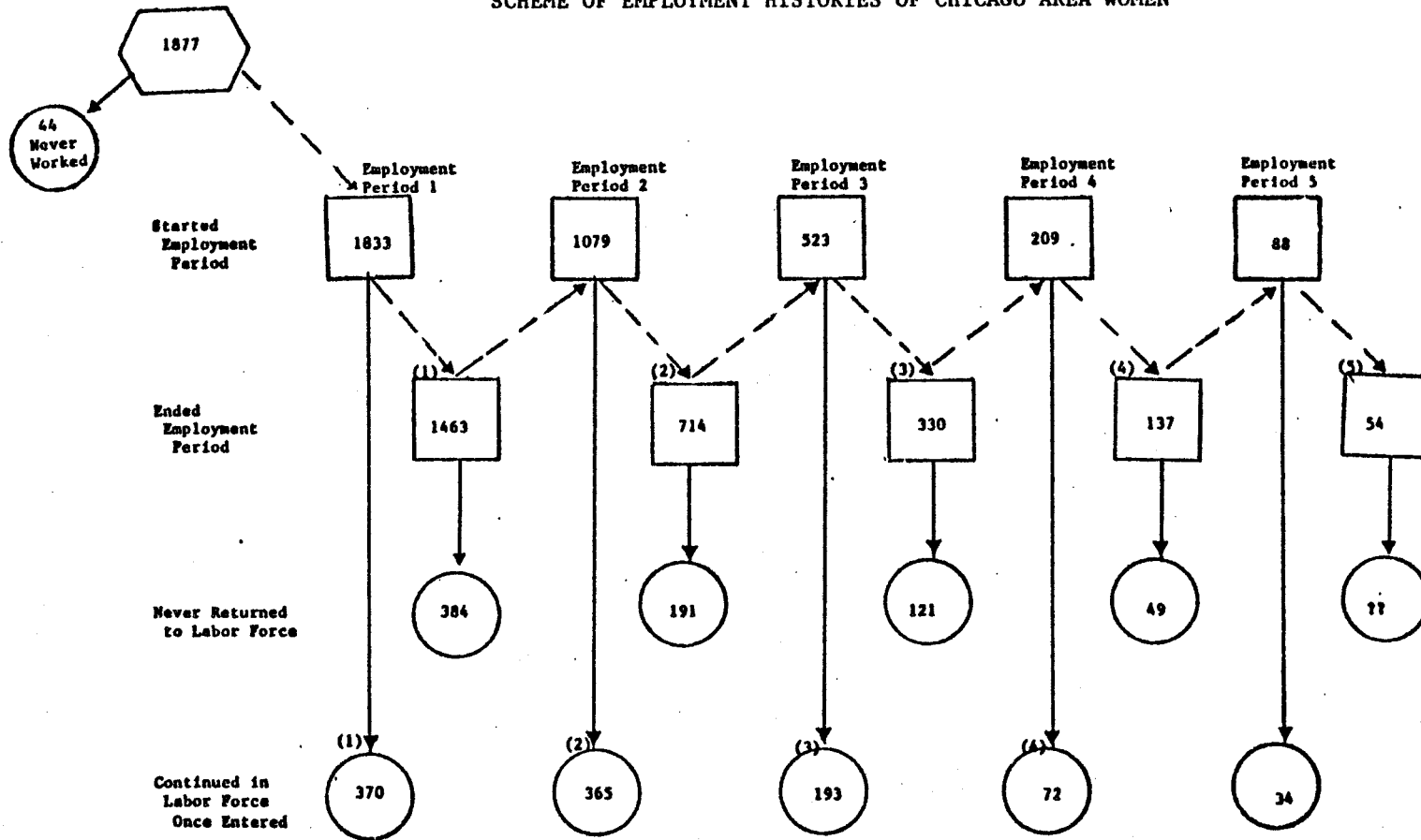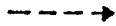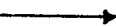
[a]Numbers in cells represent weighted cases

have at least entered and exited the labor force once prior to their current period of continuous employment. Of the 1463 women who eventually ended their first employment period, 384 (26 per cent) never returned to the paid labor market. The distribution of the employment histories for the sample and each birth cohort is shown in Table 10. Nearly 60 per cent of the sample are either currently employed in their first or second employment, or have ended their first employment period and not yet returned. The only major cohort difference found here is among different cohorts of continuous workers who, by definition, are still in their first employment period. Twenty-seven per cent of the youngest cohort are still in their first work period compared to nine per cent for the oldest cohort. The effect of age is strongly apparent here, the older respondents have lived longer and are more likely to disrupt a period of employment than the younger women.

There are some general trends that can be noted about the scheme of the respondents as they move through intermediate points of entry and exit enroute to their final employment history. Except for the first employment period, 61 per cent to 66 per cent of each group starting an employment period end it. Of those who never return after departing the labor force (26 per cent to 35 per cent), what appears most significant is the constant increase in proportion of women who stay on continuously once they return for another period of employment (20 per cent for the first employment period compared to 39 per cent for the fifth employment). The increased proportion of women who stay on continuously for each return suggests that, with each employment period a respondent is more likely to stay on continuously than for her previous work period.

TABLE 10

EMPLOYMENT HISTORIES FOR BIRTH COHORTS OF CHICAGO AREA WOMEN

(Per Cent)

Employment History:	All Women	(N)	Birth Cohorts:		
			25-34 (1943-1952)	35-44 (1933-1942)	44-54 (1923-1932)
Never Worked	2	(44)	3	2	3
Still in 1st Work Period	20	(370)	27	18	9
Exited 1st Work Period--Did Not Return to the Labor Force	20	(384)	25	17	16
In 2nd Work Period	19	(365)	17	18	25
Exited 2nd Work Period--Did Not Return to the Labor Force	10	(191)	8	14	10
In 3rd Work Period	10	(193)	8	10	14
Exited 3rd Work Period--Did Not Return to the Labor Force	6	(121)	6	6	8
In 4th Work Period	4	(72)	3	4	5
Exited 4th Work Period--Did Not Return to the Labor Force	3	(49)	2	4	3
In 5th Work Period	2	(34)	0	2	4
Exited 5th Work Period--Did Not Return to the Labor Force	3	(54)	1	5	3
Total (N)		(1877)	(846)	(571)	(459)

Timing and Duration of Labor Force Entries and Exits

As already posited, life-time labor force attachment is significantly related to early labor force experience. The timing and duration of initial labor experiences reflect the considerable variation that exists with respect to the employment choices women make across the life course. The choice to enter the labor force, as the choice to marry, are reversible decisions. Entry into the status of employee does not preclude subsequent departure. Nevertheless, a decision to work outside the home constitutes a decision not to remain at home full-time. Once a woman has been employed, her choice not to work at a later point in time is as much of a decision to work at some later date. A decision was made to use the longitudinal pattern of employment as the foundation of the expanded typology of life course patterns. Rather than viewing labor force participation as derivative of marital and mothering responsibilities, paid employment is seen as an activity that has a pattern or "rhythm" of its own in which the choice to engage in market work is as deliberate as the choice to marry or become a mother. Rather than explain labor force participation as a function of family consequences (Feldberg and Glenn, 1979), this view presents paid employment as the basis with which other activities are performed and synchronized.

This methodological decision to use labor force activity as the basis for building the expanded life course patterns typology was determined, in part, by two major features of the sample: 10 per cent of the sample have never married and 18 per cent have never been mothers, yet only two per cent have never worked. Consequently,

nearly all of the respondents have experienced the transition into
paid employment but not necessarily a comparable transition into
the roles of wife or mother. The age stratification theory
emphasizes that whether a life course event occurs at all is as
important as the timing of that event. A person who never marries
has a different life course than one who does. Working from employ-
ment, then, as a basis for cumulative life experience permits
analysis of women who have disrupted their marriage or women who
(by choice or otherwise) have not yet had children; these constitute
groups that have traditionally been ignored in most demographic and
family sociology studies. The timing and duration of employment
activity becomes particularly important in identifying variation in
life course experiences. As will be .seen later, and this is most
critical for the youngest cohort, there are more women who have
experienced only paid employment than only marriage or only
motherhood.

A methodological note is required on the choice of descriptive
statistics used in the chapter. The mean and the median both have
been utilized for considering the variation in timing of employ-
ment (see Chapter V also). Paul Glick's methodological use of the
median for describing family cycle events has dominated this area of
population studies (Glick and Parke, 1965; Glick, 1947, 1977;
Glick and Norton, 1971; Spanier and Glick, 1980). Traditionally,
transitions are analyzed on an "age at" basis (most commonly seen
in examinations of marriage) which take into account the fact of
variance in the timing of events. Most studies have utilized the
median (and more recently the mean) to portray the age at which half

a population or sample completes the transition into a selected life event. This is because the demographic family cycle literature is essentially a depiction of the "typical" experience. Since the median is less affected than the mean by extreme values, some analysts, like Modell, et. al. (1976, 1978), have extended the use of the median in conjunction with deciles to present the dispersion that occurs in the timing and completion of transitions for selected cohorts. Not all transitions happen at either the mean or median age, but the use of the mean is a convenient way of expressing at what average age life course events occur. However, the concern here is with central tendencies (rather than with dispersion) in the timing of events in order to construct an expanded typology of life course patterns. Since the eventual construction of an expanded typology is based on "average" timing of events, the mean rather than the median has been selected for analysis in this chapter. Not only does the mean use all the data available (Blalock, 1972), but presented in conjunction with standard deviations, central tendency as well as dispersion can be inter-preted.

The timing and duration of the first two employment periods are presented in Table 11. [7] For each cohort there was little variation for mean age at entry into the labor force: age 21.0 for the 25-34 cohort, age 20.9 for the 35-44 cohort and age 21.2 for the 45-54 cohort. However, there is greater cohort variation when one compares mean ages for each cohort by patterns of continuous/discontinuous employment. Within each cohort, continuous workers entered the labor force significantly later. For the youngest cohort, the mean age at

TABLE 11

MEANS FOR SELECTED EMPLOYMENT CHARACTERISTICS FOR BIRTH COHORTS OF CHICAGO AREA WOMEN

	All Women			25-34 (1943-1952)			35-44 (1933-1942)			45-54 (1923-1932)		
	Mean	Standard Deviation	(N)	Mean	Standard Deviation	(N)	Mean	Standard Deviation	(N)	Mean	Standard Deviation	(N)
Mean Age for:												
First Employment Period												
All Workers--Entered	21.0	3.8	(1830)	21.0	2.4	(1823)	20.9	4.0	(561)	21.2	5.2	(446)
Continuous Workers--Entered	23.2	5.5	(369)	21.7	2.5	(228)	24.0	6.3	(100)	29.6	9.5	(41)
Discontinuous Workers--Entered	20.4	3.0	(1461)	20.7	2.3	(595)	20.2	2.8	(461)	20.3	3.7	(405)
Discontinuous Workers--Exited	24.8	4.5	(1461)	24.0	3.1	(595)	24.7	4.6	(461)	25.9	5.9	(405)
Second Employment Period												
All Workers--Entered	29.0	7.2	(1073)	25.3	3.3	(380)	29.0	6.2	(362)	33.4	9.0	(331)
Continuous Workers--Entered	32.7	7.4	(363)	27.0	3.3	(146)	33.3	5.7	(104)	39.4	6.9	(113)
Discontinuous Workers--Entered	27.2	6.4	(710)	24.2	2.8	(234)	27.2	5.5	(258)	30.3	8.4	(218)
Discontinuous Workers--Exited	30.4	7.5	(710)	26.2	3.0	(234)	30.6	6.0	(258)	34.7	9.7	(218)

TABLE 11
(continued)

	All Women			25-34 (1943-1952)			35-44 (1933-1942)			45-54 (1923-1932)		
	Mean	Standard Deviation	(N)	Mean	Standard Deviation	(N)	Mean	Standard Deviation	(N)	Mean	Standard Deviation	(N)
Mean Length of Years for:												
First Employment Period:												
All Workers	6.6	5.6	(1830)	5.4	3.4	(723)	7.4	6.7	(561)	7.9	7.1	(446)
Continuous Workers	12.0	7.4	(369)	8.4	3.4	(228)	16.1	6.7	(100)	21.2	10.7	(41)
Discontinuous Workers	5.3	4.1	(1461)	4.3	2.5	(595)	5.5	4.4	(461)	6.5	5.0	(405)
Second Employment Period:												
All Workers	5.4	5.1	(1073)	3.5	2.4	(380)	5.6	4.6	(362)	7.6	6.8	(331)
Continuous Workers	7.9	6.3	(363)	4.3	2.9	(146)	8.6	6.2	(104)	11.9	6.8	(113)
Discontinuous Workers	4.2	3.3	(710)	3.0	1.8	(234)	4.3	3.0	(258)	5.4	5.5	(218)

entry for continuous workers was 21.7, a year later than the mean age
of 20.7 for discontinuous workers. For the middle cohort, the
difference in mean age at entry was even greater: 24.0 for
continuous workers to 20.2 for discontinuous workers. The largest
gap in mean age at entry was for the oldest cohort; continuous
workers had a mean age of 29.6 compared to 20.3 for discontinuous
workers. The finding that continuous workers started their first
period of employment significantly later than discontinuous workers
suggests that when they finally entered the labor force they were
prepared to stay. It appears that the later the entry into the
labor market the greater the chance of continuous employment. As
interesting a finding is the decreasing mean age from oldest to
youngest cohorts for continuous workers for the first employment
period. This convergence in age among the youngest cohort suggests
that the distinction between continuous and discontinuous employ-
ment is less meaningful for those women who are currently involved
in making first employment decisions. Because of the higher pro-
portions of married women with preschool children in the labor
force, labor force withdrawal for younger women is less common.
While the distinction between continuous and discontinuous employ-
ment may prove meaningful for older middle-aged women, it seems less
so for women just starting their middle years.

The mean age of departure from the first employment period was
24.8. The youngest and middle cohorts were closest in their age at
exit while the oldest cohort, who entered at approximately the same
age as the other cohorts, was later exiting the labor force (25.9).
This indicates a longer first employment period for the oldest

women at that stage of their lives. This is further reflected in
the mean length of 6.5 years for the oldest in contrast to 4.3 mean
years for the youngest cohort. The overall length of employment for
the first employment period was 5.3 years. Continuous workers for
this period were employed nearly twice the mean length of the entire
sample (12.0 years to 6.6 years). As expected, the oldest cohort
of continuous workers had a dramatically high mean length of
years (21.2) due, in part, to the effect of age. Since continuous
workers for the sample are only those women who have been continuously
employed since beginning their first entry, one might have expected
that the oldest cohort would have entered the labor force only af-
ter marriage and the completion of their childbearing years, i.e.,
they would have followed a more expected sequence of marriage,
mothering and then labor force entry. If this had been the case,
then their initial entry into the labor force would have started
much later and their mean years of continuous employment would have
been reduced considerably. However, what appears to be more likely
is that these women have been employed throughout their involvement
with family roles and started paid work when most women do -- in the
same year they completed full-time schooling.

In between the first and second employment periods, the mean
years of time out for the sample was 4.7. Again the effect of age
makes cohort comparisons difficult here. It is likely that the same
proportion of the youngest cohort who are currently employed
(continuous workers) will eventually drop out of the labor force and
return again at some later date. Contingent on the size of this
group, the mean years of time out between employment periods as well

as the mean age at exit will be affected. The time out for the youngest cohort will probably increase somewhat from 2.0 mean years, although it is unlikely to approximate either the 4.9 mean years or 8.1 mean years for the middle and older cohorts, respectively. This prediction is based, in part, on the closeness of the mean age at exit for this cohort in the first work period (24.0) and their mean age at entry in the second employment period (28.3). Since some women who have exited that first employment period have not yet returned (25 per cent of the cohort), the mean length of their time will increase since they will have a later mean age for their return to the labor force. A dramatic rise in time out is unlikely to occur since it is computed based on those who have exited as well as returned. Only those who have not returned can increase either mean, and apparently the youngest cohort will have more continuous workers than either previous cohort and there are less women who can affect the mean age.

The trend of continuous workers starting later than discontinuous workers has not changed in the second employment period, although it is briefer than the first for both continuous and discontinuous employees. However, cohort difference in mean age at start of the second employment period emerges that was not reflected in the first employment period. While all three cohorts are beginning their employment histories at the same stage in the life course, less time out between employment periods occur for each successive younger cohorts.

The discussion of the timing and duration of employment has focused thus far on "average" experience. In order to identify more

discrete changes in cohort behavior, Tables 12 through 16 present

distributions of timing and duration for all five employment

periods. Tables 12 and 13 detail further the differences in the

first and second employment periods; age differences in entering

the labor force for continuous and discontinuous workers is included,

as well as the difference in timing from the youngest to the oldest

cohort for employment returns. The differences in duration for

each pattern of employment are largely apparent in Table 12,

although the youngest cohort reflects the effect of age on the more

skewed distribution (in comparison to older cohorts) for both

groups. The greatest proportion of the youngest cohort enter

between the ages of 18 and 19 (37 per cent) and this is true for

all three cohorts. This pattern reflects the greater tendency of

discontinuous workers to enter the labor force at the completion

of high school, no matter how brief the employment period. The

distribution of continuous workers reveals two findings: first,

the large proportion of the youngest cohort entering at 22 and older

(48 per cent) suggests that most have had some college or completed

college before joining the labor force; and second, the high

proportion of women entering at age 25 and older in the middle

and older cohorts (40 per cent and 58 per cent respectively)

indicates a tendency to enter after marriage and possibly after

completion of childbearing.

The timing differences mentioned earlier for the second

employment period are more apparent in Table 13, as are the duration

differences. For those women who qualified as discontinuous

workers for this employment period, at least 60 per cent in each

cohort worked four years or less. The distribution of years worked

TABLE 12

COHORT DIFFERENCES IN THE TIMING AND DURATION OF THE FIRST EMPLOYMENT PERIOD FOR CONTINUOUS AND DISCONTINUOUS WORKERS OF CHICAGO AREA WOMEN

(Per Cent)

Duration of First Employment Period	All Women	25-34 (1943-1952)		35-44 (1933-1942)		45-54 (1923-1932)	
		Continuous	Discontinuous	Continuous	Discontinuous	Continuous	Discontinuous
1 to 2 Years	20	4	27	0	23	0	21
3 to 4 Years	27	10	37	8	31	5	25
5 to 8 Years	28	36	30	4	31	10	25
9 or More Years	25	50	6	88	15	85	28
(N)	(1823)	(228)	(595)	(100)	(461)	(41)	(405)

Age at Entry for First Employment Period	All Women	Continuous	Discontinuous	Continuous	Discontinuous	Continuous	Discontinuous
17 and Younger	6	1	3	7	9	2	10
18 to 19	37	26	35	24	44	15	43
20 to 21	24	25	28	15	21	15	23
22 to 24	23	36	29	14	18	10	17
25 and Older	10	12	5	40	8	58	7
(N)	(1830)	(228)	(595)	(100)	(461)	(41)	(405)

Age at Departure For First Employment Period	All Women	25-34		35-44		45-54	
20 and Younger	12		10		15		12
21 to 22	24		27		22		22
23 to 24	21		23		24		17
25 to 28	26		30		23		26
29 and Older	16		10		17		23
(N)	(1461)		(595)		(461)		(405)

TABLE 13

COHORT DIFFERENCES IN THE TIMING AND DURATION OF THE SECOND EMPLOYMENT PERIOD
FOR CONTINUOUS AND DISCONTINUOUS WORKERS OF CHICAGO AREA WOMEN

(Per Cent)

Duration of Second Employment Period	All Women	25-34 (1943-1952)		35-44 (1933-1942)		45-54 (1923-1932)	
		Continuous	Discontinuous	Continuous	Dicontinuous	Continuous	Discontinuous
1 to 2 Years	35	40	54	20	31	8	37
3 to 4 Years	24	23	31	22	28	8	29
5 to 8 Years	22	30	13	29	33	16	16
9 or More Years	19	8	3	39	9	68	18
(N)	(1075)	(146)	(234)	(104)	(258)	(113)	(218)
Age at Entry For Second Employment Period							
22 and Younger	17	8	26	3	23	0	21
23 to 27	36	48	62	12	37	8	26
28 to 34	26	42	12	39	29	16	26
35 and Older	21	0	0	45	11	76	28
(N)	(1073)	(146)	(234)	(104)	(258)	(113)	(218)
Age at Departure For Second Employment Period							
24 and Younger	19		27		16		15
25 to 27	26		43		19		16
28 to 34	29		30		35		20
35 and Older	26		1		30		48
(N)	(710)		(234)		(258)		(218)

has shifted for continuous workers more evenly across all four categories when compared to continuous workers in the first employment period. The only exception to this is the oldest group that, again as a function of age, had a significant proportion who worked nine years or more in their second paid work period (68 per cent).

Most women are beginning their second employment period between the ages of 23 and 27 (36 per cent). For the youngest cohort, 62 per cent started between these ages compared to 37 per cent and 26 per cent, respectively, in the two older cohorts. The difference, however, that is most notable is between continuous and discontinuous employees. The distribution is skewed to the older end of the age range for continuous workers while discontinuous workers are more evenly distributed among all four age ranges. Again, this corroborates the earlier finding that the later the entry into employment the greater the chance of continuous employment, even for women who have already entered and exited the labor force at least once.

Cohort differences in the timing and duration for the thrid, fourth and fifth employment periods are presented in Tables 14 through 16. The effect of age makes the interpretation of the youngest cohort's behavior problematic since they have had less time to move in or out of the labor force. Also the per cents presented in age at entry and departure represent only some fraction of the cohrt as some become too young to qualify for the tested age ranges. However, for the purposes of describing who is involved in these employment periods, the data has been presented.

TABLE 14

COHORT DIFFERENCES IN THE TIMING AND DURATION OF THE THIRD EXPLOYMENT PERIOD FOR
CONTINUOUS AND DISCONTINUOUS WORKERS OF CHICAGO AREA WOMEN

		(Per Cent)					
Duration of Third Employment Period	All Women	25–34 (1943–1952)		35–44 (1933–1942)		45–54 (1923–1932)	
		Continuous	Discontinuous	Continuous	Discontinuous	Continuous	Discontinuous
1 Year	28	47	21	30	28	24	21
2 Years	24	10	33	20	36	6	24
3 to 5 Years	28	30	33	27	21	21	34
6 or More Years	20	13	12	23	15	49	20
(N)	(520)	(70)	(99)	(60)	(120)	(63)	(108)
Age at Entry For Third Employment Period							
26 and Younger	26	21	52	2	36	0	23
27 to 33	28	59	48	5	29	3	14
32 to 39	24	20	1	50	32	35	19
40 and Older	22	--	--	43	2	62	44
(N)	(520)	(70)	(99)	(60)	(120)	(63)	(108)
Age at Departure For Third Employment Period							
26 and Younger	24		26		26		20
27 to 30	24		43		23		7
31 to 38	26		30		34		12
39 and Older	26		--		17		61
(N)	(327)		(99)		(120)		(108)

TABLE 15

COHORT DIFFERENCES IN THE TIMING AND DURATION OF THE FOURTH EMPLOYMENT PERIOD FOR
CONTINUOUS AND DISCONTINUOUS WORKERS OF CHICAGO AREA WOMEN

| | | (Per Cent) | | | | | |
| | | 25-34 (1943-1952) | | 35-44 (1933-1942) | | 45-54 (1923-1932) | |
Duration for Fourth Employment Period	All Women	Continuous	Discontinuous	Continuous	Dicontinuous	Continuous	Discontinuous
1 Year	28	71	16	17	23	14	26
2 Years	24	7	24	26	28	14	31
3 to 4 Years	24	7	28	22	32	38	17
5 or More Years	24	14	32	35	17	33	26
(N)	(199)	(28)	(25)	(23)	(60)	(21)	(42)
Age at Entry for Fourth Employment Period							
23 and Younger	27	--	84	--	37	--	24
27 to 31	24	71	8	--	28	5	17
32 to 39	23	29	8	61	23	--	17
40 and Older	27	--	--	39	12	95	43
(N)	(199)	(28)	(25)	(23)	(60)	(21)	(42)
Age at Departure For Fourth Employment Period							
27 and Younger	20		36		20		12
28 to 31	34		56		28		29
32 to 41	25		8		45		7
32 and Older	20		--		7		52
(N)	(127)		(25)		(60)		(42)

TABLE 16

COHORT DIFFERENCES IN THE TIMING AND DURATION OF THE FIFTH EMPLOYMENT PERIOD FOR
CONTINUOUS AND DISCONTINUOUS WORKERS OF CHICAGO AREA WOMAN

Duration of Fifth Employment Period	All Women	25–34 (1943–1952)		35–44 (1933–1942)		45–54 (1923–1932)	
		Continuous	Discontinuous	Continuous	Discontinuous	Continuous	Discontinuous
1 Year	17	--	--	33	21	10	15
2 Years	32	100	--	17	48	26	26
3 to 5 Years	29	--	75	25	24	10	46
6 or More Years	23	--	25	25	7	53	15
(N)	(84)	(3)	(8)	(12)	(29)	(19)	(13)
Age at Entry For Fifth Employment Period							
29 and Younger	24	100	100	--	2	--	7
30 to 32	24	--	--	--	48	21	15
33 to 41	26	--	--	75	24	10	31
42 and Older	26	--	--	25	--	69	46
(N)	(84)	(3)	(8)	(12)	(29)	(19)	(13)
Age at Departure For Fifth Employment Period							
30 and Younger	26		75		21		7
31 to 33	28		25		41		--
34 to 42	28		--		38		23
42 and Older	18		--		--		69
(N)	(50)		(8)		(29)		(13)

Personal Characteristics Associated with Employment History Patterns

In order to integrate employment history patterns into the life course patterns based on cumulative experience, the eleven categories shown in Table 10 were collapsed into five modal categories: (1) stil in first employment period (20 per cent); (2) exited first employment period and has not returned (20 per cent); (3) two or more employment periods with the respondent currently employed (35 per cent); (4) two or more employment periods with the respondent currently out of the labor force (22 per cent); and (5) never worked (two per cent). Using these modal categories, the number of employment periods and current employment status still differentiate the possible varieties of employment histories a woman can follow. By race, (Table 17) about equal numbers of whites and non-whites are still in their first employment period (25 per cent to 18 per cent). As Blau (1978) has pointed out, black and other non-white women have a greater financial need to earn money because a higher proportion of them are divorced, separated and widowed. They rely heavily on their own earnings to support them and their families throughout their childbearing and childrearing years. In fact, the tendency of the oldest non-white cohort to work continuously is reflected further in the lower proportion (33 per cent) compared to older whites (55 per cent) who have had two work periods or more and are currently employed. This suggests that older whites are more likely to move in and out of the labor force than older non-whites; the latter remaining on continuously in response to economic pressures while the former have appeared to disrupt their employment more in response to familial demands (Bird, 1979).

TABLE 17

EMPLOYMENT HISTORY PATTERNS BY BIRTH COHORTS CONTROLLING FOR RACE
(Per Cent)

Employment History Patterns	Race							
	Non-White				White			
	All Women	25-34 (1943-1952)	35-44 (1933-1942)	45-54 (1923-1932)	All Women	25-34 (1943-1952)	35-44 (1933-1942)	45-54 (1923-1932)
Still in First Employment Period	25	30	23	20	18	26	16	5
Exit First Employment Period-- Has not Returned	14	13	14	16	22	28	18	16
Two or More Employment Periods-- Currently in Labor Force	31	31	30	33	36	29	36	51
Two or More Employment Periods-- Currently out of Labor Force	23	20	27	23	22	15	30	26
Never Worked	6	5	6	7	1	2	0	1
N	(414)	(172)	(133)	(109)	(1460)	(672)	(438)	(350)

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Employment histories differ most by education (Table 18) especially between women with a high school degree or less and those with some college or more who are still in their first employment period. A greater proportion with a college education or more are employed than those with a high school diploma or less who are in their first paid work period (27 per cent to 15 per cent). This is particularly true for the youngest cohort (16 per cent difference) in which the level of education is highest and there is a higher proportion of never married women or women married with no children. Inversely, women with less education are more likely to have disrupted employment histories and be currently out of the labor force (27 per cent to 16 per cent). Among the oldest cohort, those with less education are twice as likely to have had·two employment periods and not be employed than those with higher levels of education.

These findings corroborate the findings described elsewhere in which the more education a woman has the more likely she will be employed outside the home (Hayghe, 1975). Women with more education ultimately have more employment opportunities than less educated women. The correlation between educational attainment and employment indicates the fact that those with more education have a better chance of finding work; and in particular, work that pays enough to allow them to purchase goods and services that can ease their domestic responsibilities (Blau, 1978). Level of education appears to be one major factor in determining whether a woman will work, regardless of her marital status. It does not necessarily indicate whether she will work continuously or not, nor how many times she will actually exit and reenter the labor market. Rather,

TABLE 18

EMPLOYMENT HISTORY PATTERNS BY BIRTH COHORTS CONTROLLING FOR EDUCATION
(Per Cent)

Employment History Patterns	Education							
	High School Graduate or Less				Some College or More			
	All Women	25-34 (1943-1952)	35-44 (1933-1942)	45-54 (1923-1932)	All Women	25-34 (1943-1952)	35-44 (1933-1942)	45-54 (1923-1932)
Still in First Employment Period	15	19	14	8	27	35	23	10
Exit First Employment Period--Has Not Returned	22	27	20	18	18	24	12	13
Two or More Employment Periods-- Currently in Labor Force	34	28	32	43	38	30	39	56
Two or more Employment Periods-- Currently out of Labor Force	27	22	31	29	16	10	26	18
Never Worked	3	4	3	3	1	1	0	2
N	(1085)	(423)	(362)	(289)	(790)	(421)	(209)	(157)

educational attainment can determine how likely a woman is to
be employed over the life course.

The level of parents' socio-economic status has less predictive
value than either race or education for employment history patterns
for this sample of women (see Table 19). The difference between
women whose parents' socio-economic status was low and those whose
parents had medium to high socio-economic status appears negligible.
What cohort differences do appear are paralleled in both social
class groups. As one might expect, far more women in the youngest
cohort were still in their first employment period for both
socio-economic groups. The exact inverse of this cohort difference
occurred in the group with an employment history pattern of two or
more work periods and were currently employed. The oldest cohort
had nearly a 20 per cent higher proportion than the youngest cohort
for both socio-economic groups. One might have predicted that
women from families of orientation where the parents' social class
was low would have had more disruptions in their employment histories
in response to periods of economic pressure within their own
families of procreation (since most women marry men of similar
class background). That, however, does not show up here. Rather,
the effect of age consistently explains more, given the two relation-
ships mentioned between the youngest and oldest cohort. The oldest
women who were employed at the time of the interview have lived
longer and have had a greater opportunity to make job and
employment changes than younger women, independent of social class or
family orientation.

TABLE 19

EMPLOYMENT HISTORY PATTERNS BY BIRTH COHORTS CONTROLLING FOR PARENTAL

SOCIO-EOCNOMIC STATUS

(Per Cent)

| | Parental Socio-Economic Status | | | | | | | |
| | Low | | | | Medium to High | | | |
Employment History Patterns	All Women	25-34 (1943-1952)	35-44 (1933-1942)	45-54 (1923-1932)	All Women	25-34 (1943-1952)	35-44 (1933-1942)	45-54 (1923-1932)
Still in First Employment Period	16	21	16	9	23	30	19	8
Exit First Employment Period--Has Not Returned	21	23	20	20	20	26	14	11
Two or More Employment Periods-- Currently in Labor Force	34	27	32	44	37	31	38	51
Two or More Employment Periods-- Currently out of Labor Force	26	24	31	24	18	11	28	27
Never Worked	3	4	1	3	1	1	1	2
N	(869)	(308)	(291)	(270)	(945)	(519)	(250)	(176)

Marital History Patterns

As Taeuber and Sweet (1976) point out, most first marriages occur within a brief span of the life course. Most American women over the last century have married between the ages of eighteen and twenty-three. Marital age in particular has been analyzed rather extensively as a determinant of fertility (Bumpass, 1969: Bumpass, Rindfuss and Janosik, 1978) and for its impact on marital permanence (Bumpass and Sweet, 1972; Glick and Norton, 1971). Except for Elder (1972) and Elder and Rockwell (1976) few studies have investigated age at marriage in terms of its own temporal phases, nor have there been studies that have charted longitudinally the marital histories of women through middle age. Divorce, separation, widowhood and remarriage have been studied separately with little effort made to describe and predict life time patterns for women and men who experience disrupted marriages. The emphasis on the age at first marriage in the literature has kept thse different analytic approaches focused on behavior of future activities, i.e. childbearing, employment and advanced education, without significant regard for how women who experience marital disruption go on to reestablish marital careers.

Historical Evidence of Changing Marriage and Divorce Patterns

As previously mentioned, most first marriages still occur within a very narrow age range in the life course. The average age at marriage has ranged from high of 21.4 during the 1900s and 1930s to a low of 20.0 in the 1950s (Glick, 1977). However, as Taeuber and Sweet (1976) argue, this perception of stability is only that--a perception. Considerable change has occurred with respect to the age patterns of marriage and divorce when the trends in the proportion never married and the rates of

divorce are examined more closely.

From the late nineteenth century until the middle of the twentieth century, there was a slowly rising pattern of earlier and more frequent marriage. This trend culminated in the 1950s with the early marriage experience of the birth cohort of 1935-1939. Then around 1970 there was a sudden reversal in which the women born in the period after World War II started to delay marriage. The median age at marriage moved from 20.5 in the 1960s to 21.2 in the 1970s (Glick, 1977). By comparison, the proportion who never married was highest in the first thirty years of this century, averaging between eight or nine per cent. By the 1950s, the per cent never married dropped to four per cent only to experience the same reversal as age at marriage; by the 1970s, the proportion never married had reached seven per cent.

In the 1950s, the young age at first marriage and the low proportion of never married women reflected the economic conditions of the cohort born during the low-birth rate period of the 1930s. The women who married during the 1950s stand in contrast to the birth cohort of that same decade who have postponed marriage and contributed to a higher than previous proportion of women who never married before middle age. Some demographic speculation on the marital obstacles that face these younger cohorts of women can account for their behavior. Carter and Glick, in their book Marriage and Divorce (1976), refer to the "marriage squeeze" which developed during the late 1960s. At the ages when most people marry, there were five to 10 per cent more women than men. Part of the marriage squeeze is a result of the American male's tendency to marry women two to three years younger than themselves as well as the equally common phenomenon of young women being ready to marry before men of the same age.

Increased proportions of women delayed marriage to a later age as a result of the marital squeeze. Carter and Glick predict that the marriage squeeze will reverse itself by the 1980s when an excess of marriageable men can be expected. This will happen, in part, because as people born in a period of declining birth rates (post-1957) reach marrying age the supply of single men of a given age will be larger relative to the supply of single women who are two to three years younger.

The historical patterns of the age at marriage and proportion never married have shifted most during the decade of the 1970s. This is true for divorce as well. In fact, the divorce rate increased two fold between 1960 and 1970 (Glick and Norton, 1976). The two high points in the divorce rate have occurred between 1946 to 1950 and 1970 to the present. The divorce rate has climbed yearly since 1966, and doubled in the decade between 1966 and 1976 (Adams, 1980). Since 1976, the divorce rate has stabilized at 20 per 1,000 marriages. Two demographic factors may have contributed to this increase in marital instability. First, the recent decrease in the fertility rate can serve to reduce obstacles to divorce. With a low birth rate, more couples are likely to be childless, and correspondingly, a small family size means that the nuclear family includes younger children for a smaller proportion of a couple's married life. To the extent that young children serve as an obstacle to divorce, low fertility rates remove a barrier (Ross and Sawhill, 1975). Another demographic explanation is suggested by age structure of the population. Since 1967 a large proportion of marriages in the U.S. have been in a high risk period--namely, those first few years of marriage. The marriages of "baby boom" people, born between 1945 and 1960, were in a high risk period in the late 1960s; consequently the steady increase in

the divorce rate corresponds to this group's period of marital high risk. The stabilizing divorce rate might reflect the fact that "baby boom" marriages are nearing the end of their high risk period (Adams, 1980).

The increase in divorce is a response to non-demographic factors as well. Women's ability to earn separate incomes through increased employment has eliminated their economic dependence on men and has allowed those women who wish to divorce to do so (Ross and Sawhill, 1975). In combination with women's increased educational attainments and the decrease in the birth rate, female labor force participation has increased the potential for divorce as women increase their opportunities for employment and decrease their childrearing responsibilities. Certainly attitudinal and normative changes reflect the acceptance of divorce. As Mandle (1979) puts it, since the 1960s, "the stigma once attached by American culture to divorce (started fading . . . and at the same time, the ideological belief in individual development and fulfillment (may) have influenced the divorce rate" (1979: 124).

Remarriage trends are associated closely with the divorce rate. Historically, most remarriages followed widowhood since most first marriages until this century ended with the death of a spouse. In 1900, 3 per cent of all brides had been divorced. By 1930, the proportion of divorced brides had reached 9 per cent, and by 1975 the figure was 25 per cent (Cherlin, 1978). Clearly, as more couples divorce, more people provide a pool of individuals for whom remarriage is a possibility. The high rate of remarriage follows from a high divorce rate. The high remarriage rate since 1960 will probably continue as long as the stigma of divorce continues to fade.

Cohort Differences and Similarities in Marriage and Divorce Patterns

Given this background on marriage and divorce patterns of American women, it is of particular interest that the sample for this study spans the birth cohorts in American society that have experienced both the highest and lowest rates of marriage and divorce in this century. Using the reconstructed marital histories of the sample, Table 20 presents the proportion of women currently married, never married and ever divorced for the three cohorts of Chicago area women. The first section of the table for currently married women (note--this includes women in their first, second and third marriages) demonstrates a common life course difference (Ld) in the proportion of women currently married from ages 15-24 to ages 25-34. There appears to be a matched longitudinal pattern within each cohort reflecting a lower proportion currently married for 15-24 followed by a dramatic rise in the proportion currently married from 25-34. As one might predict, the youngest cohort had the fewest proportion currently married in both age ranges (27 per cent and 76 per cent respectively), while the Ld was smallest for the middle cohort (42 per cent) and largest for the oldest cohort (56 per cent). The marriage rate was highest during the 1950s and accordingly the middle cohort, who was aged 15-24 in 1957, had the highest proportion married for that age range (87 per cent). The life course differences for ages 25-34 to 35-44 changed in opposite directions for the two oldest cohorts: the middle cohort decreased by six per cent the proporiton of women currently married while the oldest cohort increased its proportion currently married by two per cent. Overall, this is only an eight per cent cohort difference, but the change in opposite directions for the proportions currently married in each cohort is more significant than the actual difference.   This is

TABLE 20

PROPORTION OF WOMEN IN DIFFERENT MARITAL STATUSES AT SELECTED
AGES FOR BIRTH COHORTS OF CHICAGO AREA WOMEN

Current Age:	Per Cent Currently Married At Age:				
	15-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	N
25-34 (1943-1952)	27	76			(842)
35-44 (1933-1942)	42	84	79		(570)
45-54 (1923-1932)	31	87	89	82	(457)
	Per Cent Never Married At Age:				
	15-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	N
25-34 (1943-1952)	72	16			(842)
35-44 (1933-1942)	57	12	6		(570)
45-44 (1923-1932)	68	10	4	4	(457)
	Per Cent Ever Divorced At Age:				
	15-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	N
25-34 (1943-1952)	2	12			(842)
35-44 (1933-1942)	1	9	20		(570)
45-54 (1923-1932)	1	7	13	18	(457)

closely associated with the proportion of ever divorced women in each
cohort. Not surprisingly, the proportion currently married eventually
changed directions when the oldest cohort turned 45-54 (a decrease of seven
per cent). The drop in the proportion currently married for both cohorts
occurred in the same ten year period--for the decade between 1967 and 1977
in which the U.S. divorce rate nearly doubled (Adams, 1980).

The period differences and direction of the differences observed
when all three cohort were 15-24 parallel each other for both the propor-
tion currently married and the proportion never married. Again, the middle
cohort stands out with the lowest proportion never married between 15-24,
while the oldest and youngest cohort are most alike (68 per cent and 72
per cent respectively). The oldest cohort was aged 15-24 in 1947, and
as expected, had postponed marriage until the war was well over. For the
youngest cohort, the high proportion never married can be explained some-
what differently. Given their higher level of educational attainment and
the obstacles created by the marriage squeeze, more of the youngest
cohort has postponed marriage in order to complete their education and
gain paid employment experience.

The longitudinal patterns of never married women for each cohort
mirror their longitudinal patterns for currently married women. There is,
in each cohort, an initially large proportion of women who remain
unmarried at ages 15-24. A large decrease suddenly occurs when each
cohort reaches 25-34. The period differences of who remains unmarried
are not significant although the largest group of never marrieds is in
the youngest cohort--this complements their behavior as the group with
the lowest proportion of currently married for that same age range. Over-
all, period differences account for the transitional behavior of the 1933-

1942 bith cohort who reached its marital age range during the 1950s. The youngest and oldest cohorts are more similar to each other, particularly between the ages of 15 and 24, although different historical and demographic reasons account for their period differences at later ages. There are no large observable cohort differences nor age-strata differences for either the currently married or never married tables. One exception might be the age strata differences (diagonal) for the proportion of never married females at the time of the interview. Sixteen per cent of the youngest have never married compared to four per cent of the oldest cohort. Given the common presence of life course differences within each cohort and the clear trend of period differences, it can be argued that there is a period effect present and reflected by these measurable differences (Palmore, 1978). Less obvious might be a confounding cohort effect due to the slight presence of age-strata difference in conjunction with period differences that has influenced the behavior of both the oldest and youngest cohorts. If cohort effects theoretically represent the interaction of a historical situation with the age of a birth cohort, then the changing marital patterns here signal some underlying cohort effects if based on demographic changes alone. The strength of the period effects are clearest based on the dramatic presence of observable period differences; the lack of strong cohort differences suggests a comparable but weaker set of cohort effects. The separation of period and cohort effects, under these conditions is not possible and leaves interpretation of the inferred effects ambiguous. In the chapter on the cohort-historical context, this counfounding of cohort and period effects will be explored in more detail.

The section of Table 20 that presents the proportion ever divorced lacks any measurable differences, although there are some clear trends that

must be noted. The overall longitudinal pattern for each cohort appears to be an increase in the proportion divorced at each age range. Currently, and despite the differences in life stage, the largest age-strata differences for the proportion of women currently divorced (diagonal furthest over) is eight per cent (difference between the middle and youngest cohorts who had respectively a proportion of 20 per cent and 12 per cent ever divorced). One might have predicted a higher rate of ever divorced for this sample given the historical trend in marital instability for the decade between 1967 and 1977 when the youngest cohort turned 25 to 34, the middle cohort turned 35 to 44 and the oldest cohort turned 45 to 54. For the youngest cohort, in particular, this time represents their "high-risk" period in which the likelihood of divorce is greatest.

Marital Histories

The historical trends in marriage and divorce and the cohort differences presented thus far do not attempt to chart or analyze over time actual marital careers. Using the synthetic longitudinal data base on marital histories, a scheme of marital histories was designed to follow the sample through various junctures in their marital careers. In Figure 9, the same format used to present educational and employment history patterns is used here to present marital history patterns. The numbers in each cell represent actual cases; the squares in the top two tiers contain cases that have moved through the various intermediate points of entry into and exit from marriage; the circles in the two lower tiers contain the cases for each possible current marital history status. Table 21, used in conjunction with Figure 9 shows the per cent distribution of the cases for each current marital history status.

The scheme shown in Figure 9 applies only to ever married women;

FIGURE 9

SCHEME OF MARITAL HISTORIES OF CHICAGO AREA WOMEN[a]

KEY
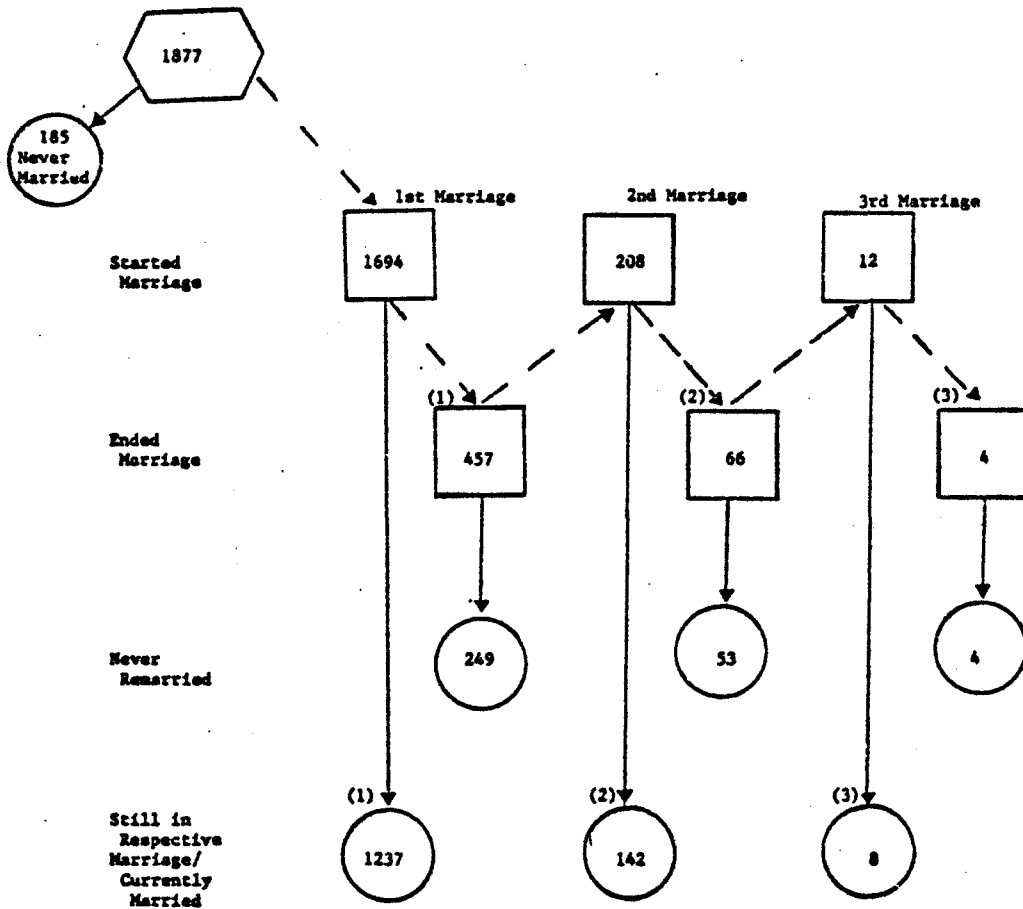
☐   Intermediate Points of Entry and Exit for Marital Histories

◯   Marital History after Entries and Exits

— — — ➤   Leading to Intermediate Points of Entering and Ending Marriages

————➤   Leading to Final Marital History

[a]Numbers in cells represent weighted cases

TABLE 21

MARITAL HISTORIES FOR BIRTH COHORTS OF CHICAGO AREA WOMEN

Marital History:	All Women	(N)	Birth Cohorts:		
			25-34 (1943-1952)	35-44 (1933-1942)	45-54 (1923-1932)
Never Married	10	(185)	16	6	4
Still in 1st Marriage	66	(1237)	65	66	67
Ended 1st Marriage Did not Remarry	13	(249)	10	16	14
Still in 2nd Marriage	8	(142)	6	8	9
Ended 2nd Marriage Did not Remarry	3	(53)	2	4	3
Still in 3rd Marriage	0	(8)	---	---	2
Ended 3rd Marriage Did not Remarry	0	(4)	---	---	1
N		(1877)	(846)	(571)	(459)

(Per Cent)

since ten per cent of the sample (185 cases) never married, this scheme

charts the marital careers of the remaining 1,694 cases (90 per cent).

Of these first marriages, 1,237 (73 per cent) have remained intact. Of

the 457 first marriages (23 per cent) that ended either in separation,

divorce, or widowhood, 208 women (46 per cent) went on to remarry a

second time while 249 women (54 per cent) had not yet married by the time

of the interview. For second marriages, the proportion of marriages that

ended increased only slightly: 142 cases, or 68 per cent, remained married

while 66 cases (or 32 percent) had marriages that ended for a second

time. However, a much larger proportion chose not to remarry for a third

time; only 20 per cent or 12 cases of those whose second marriges ended

went on to remarry. The proportion of both those who remained in their

third marriages and those whose third marriages ended matches the propor-

tion who experienced each respective possibility in their second marriage.

It is apparent from Table 21 that over 75 per cent of the sample

has either never married or is still in their first marriage. As pre-

viously noted and explained, the proportion never married is largest

among the youngest cohort. The proportion with their first marriage still

intact does not vary by cohort nor does there appear to be significant var-

iation by cohort for any specific current marital history status. This sug-

gests that in the aggregate and for each cohort there will always be some

proportion who will follow more varied marital careers; but the proportion

who remain in their first marriage is likely to remain constant. One might

predict that as the youngest cohort lives out more of their life, the propor-

tion of never marrieds will decrease and be absorbed by the proportion still in

their first marriage. This might alter the latter category so that it appears

that the youngest women keep more first marriages intact as they marry later and have a great chance for marital stability (Bumpass and Sweet, 1972). However, given the divorce rate, what apperas to be equally possible is that as never married females enter first marriages they will replace those women whose first marriages have ended; consequently, the proportion still in their first marriage will remain about constant.

Timing variations in the marital careers of this sample have not matched the historical marriage patterns of the United States as described earlier. The birth cohort of 1923 to 1932 probably experienced most of its first marriages during the late 1940s and early 1950s while the birth cohort of 1933 to 1942 experiences most of its first marriages during the 1950s and early 1960s. As indicated by Glick (1977) and Spanier and Glivk (1980), age at first marriage had been highest during the 1900s and 1930s. During the 1940s it started to decline and reached its lowest level during the 1950s. Extrapolating from this national age at marriage trend, one would predict that the middle and oldest cohorts would have relatively low mean ages at first marriage, with the former slightly lower than the latter. Table 22 indicates that this did in fact occur. As expected, the oldest cohort had a slightly higher mean age at first marriage than the middle cohort, 23.0 and 22.5 respectively. However, the mean ages at first marriage was lowest for the youngest cohort (22.2), despite the clear national trend of an older age at first marriage for women who married during the mid 1960s and early 1970s. The most obvious explanation for this, and a problem symptomatic of the data on the youngest women, is that only a portion of this cohort has entered marriage and does not include those women who will eventually marry later.

Given the high proportion of never married females in this cohort,

TABLE 22
MEANS FOR SELECTED CHARACTERISTICS OF MARRIAGE AND MOTHERING
FOR BIRTH COHORTS OF CHICAGO AREA WOMEN

	All Women			25-34 (1943-1952)			35-44 (1933-1942)			45-54 (1923-1932)		
	Mean	Standard Deviation	(N)	Mean	Standard Deviation	(N)	Mean	Standard Deviation	(N)	Mean	Standard Deviation	(N)
Mean Age at:												
First Marriage	22.5	3.7	(1686)	22.2	2.6	(709)	22.5	4.1	(538)	23.0	4.3	(439)
End of First Marriage	31.6	8.5	(450)	26.0	3.5	(157)	32.6	6.5	(160)	36.9	10.6	(133)
Mean Length of Years for:												
First Marriage—Entire Sample	14.2	8.8	(1683)	7.2	3.4	(707)	15.7	6.1	(537)	23.5	8.1	(439)
First Marriage—Still Intact	15.2	9.0	(1233)	7.3	3.4	(550)	17.2	5.4	(377)	26.8	4.4	(306)
First Marriage—Ended	11.4	7.7	(450)	6.7	3.7	(157)	12.2	6.2	(160)	15.9	9.6	(133)
Mean Age at:												
First Birth	24.1	4.1	(1531)	23.5	3.4	(590)	24.0	4.3	(511)	25.0	4.4	(430)
Last Birth	29.9	5.1	(1531)	26.6	3.2	(590)	30.2	4.7	(511)	33.4	5.1	(430)
Mean Years for:												
Time Spent in Childbearing	6.7	4.8	(1288)	4.2	2.6	(427)	6.9	4.5	(470)	9.2	5.5	(391)
Mean Number of Children	3.0	1.8	(1546)	2.2	1.1	(593)	3.2	1.7	(519)	3.8	2.1	(433)

this figure undoubtedly underestimates the eventual mean age at first marriage. One could predict that by the time this cohort reaches 35 to 44 it will have the highest mean age at first marriage. Since the women who have not yet married but will marry relatively late are not represented here. This caveat must be made in reference to most of the data regarding the youngest cohort. For the 1943-1952 birth cohort, the data on marriage and childbearing (especially Table 22) is particularly susceptible to this problem of underestimation.[8]

Personal Characteristics Associated with Marital History Patterns

The marital history patterns in Table 21 were collapsed into four categories to reflect cumulative marital histories: still in first marriage (66 per cent), out of first marriage and not currently married (16 per cent), out of first marriage but currently married (eight per cent) and never married (10 percent). The distribution of these marital histories varies significantly by race as indicated in Table 23. Whites, as a whole, have a much higher proportion of women still in their first marriage than non-whites (71 per cent to 47 per cent). When comparing cohorts, the proportion in their first marriage is still significantly higher for whites. This finding reflects, in part, the fact that black women generally marry earlier than whites and experience marital dissolution earlier and more frequently than whites (Norton, 1974). The proportion out of their first marriage and not currently married is three times as high for non-whites than whites; this is true for the youngest and oldest cohorts as well. The proportion never married does not differ significantly between racial groups, although for the youngest cohort nearly tiwce as many non-whites (23 per cent) than whites (14 per cent) have never married. Black women

TABLE 23

MARITAL HISTORY PATTERNS BY BIRTH COHORTS CONTROLLING FOR RACE
(Per Cent)

Marital History Patterns	Race							
	Non-White				White			
	All Women	25-34 (1943-1952)	35-44 (1933-1942)	45-54 (1923-1932)	All Women	25-34 (1943-1952)	35-44 (1933-1942)	45-54 (1923-1932)
Still in First Marriage	47	45	51	46	71	70	70	74
Out of First Marriage-- Not Currently Married	34	30	36	38	11	8	15	12
Out of First Marriage-- Currently Married	6	3	5	13	8	7	9	10
Never Married	12	23	8	3	9	14	5	11
(N)	(414)	(172)	(133)	(109)	(1460)	(672)	(438)	(350)

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in particular have had a history of lower rates of per cent married as well as a higher per cent of never married women (Carter and Glick, 1976) than other non-white groups or white women.

The marital history patterns vary little for ever married women when controlling for education (Table 24). For never married women, those with some college or more had twice the proportion of never married women than those with a high school degree or less (15 per cent to six per cent). Women with some college or more in the youngest cohort, had the largest proportion of never married women. Given the previously noted trend of higher educational attainment in this cohort, this finding further documents the shifting behavior of the youngest cohort to postpone marriage until leaving full-time school.

Marital history patterns did not vary significantly when controlling for family of orientation's socio-economic status (Table 25). There is some indication that women in the older cohorts from families with a medium to high socio-economic background were more likely to still be in their first marriage than those from a lower socio-economic background.

Mothering History Patterns

There is considerable evidence, by demographers in particular on the strong relationship between age at marriage patterns and patterns for age at first birth (Glick, 1977; Norton, 1974; Spanier and Glick, 1980; and Taueber and Sweet, 1976). Like age at marriage, age at first birth has occurred within a fairly narrow range of the life course for American women. Trends in the birth rate have paralleled marital rates throughout most decades of the twentieth century. The literature on age at birth has emphasized the relationships between fertility and education and fertility

TABLE 24

MARITAL HISTORY PATTERNS BY BIRTH COHORTS CONTROLLING FOR EDUCATION
(Per Cent)

	Level of Education							
	High School or Less				Some College or More			
Marital History Pattern	All Women	25-34 (1943-1952)	35-44 (1933-1932)	45-54 (1923-1932)	All Women	25-34 (1943-1952)	35-44 (1933-1942)	45-54 (1923-1932)
Still in First Marriage	66	67	66	65	66	64	66	73
Out of First Marriage-- Not Currently Married	18	15	20	19	14	10	20	17
Out of First Marriage-- Currently Married	10	9	9	14	5	4	8	4
Never Married	6	9	5	2	15	23	7	7
(N)	(1 85)	(423)	(362)	(300)	(787)	(421)	(209)	(157)

TABLE 25

MARITAL HISTORY PATTERNS BY BIRTH COHORTS CONTROLLING FOR PARENTAL
SOCIO-ECONOMIC STATUS

(Per Cent)

Marital History Patterns	Parental Socio-Economic Status							
	Low				Medium to High			
	All Women	25-34 (1943-1952)	35-44 (1933-1942)	45-54 (1923-1932)	All Women	25-34 (1943-1952)	35-44 (1933-1942)	45-54 (1923-1932)
Still in First Marriage	62	63	60	62	70	67	73	74
Out of First Marriage--Not Currently Married	20	18	23	21	12	10	15	14
Out of First Marriage-- Currently Married	10	7	9	14	6	6	8	7
Never Married	8	12	8	3	11	17	4	6
(N)	(869)	(308)	(291)	(270)	(945)	(519)	(250)	(176)

and employment. Certain various types of linkages have been explored in detail: how education effects fertility (Rindfuss and Sweet, 1977), how age at first birth affects female educational attainment (Waite and Moore, 1978), and how wife's employment and childbearing patterns are interrelated (Moore and Hofferth, 1979; Waite and Stolzenberg, 1976; Wells, 1977). These relationships merit investigation in their own right, but the emphasis in this section will be on childbearing patterns themselves: age at first birth, age at last birth, years spent in childbearing and total number of children. For the purposes of the construction of the life course patterns typology, the mothering history patterns of the sample are discussed below. But unlike education, employment and marriage, no cumulative mothering history typology has been constructed. Rather, once a woman had a first child, she was subsequently categorized as involved in the mothering role from that year on.

<u>Historical Evidence of Changing Patterns in Childbearing</u>

Since the beginning of this century, the median age at first birth has ranged between a low of 21.4 years in the 1950s to a high of 23.5 years on the 1950s. As mentioned in the marital history section, this birth cohort of the 1910s (who married during the 1930s) also had the highest age at first marriage rate for this century, and consequently had the highest median age at first childbirth, fewer children, and a higher rate of childlessness (Glick, 1977). Not surprisingly, the lowest median age at first birth for the 1950s corresponded to the early marriage, brief interval between marriage and first birth, and greater number of children for that same decade. This birth cohort of the 1930s produced the "baby boom" of the late 1940s and 1950s. Women who became mothers in the 1970s,

i.e., the daughters of the "baby boom" mothers, reversed this trend of early childbearing so that the median age at first birth had increased to 22.7 during this last decade.

The median age at last birth in this century reveals a steady decline for women who married in the 1900s (32.9 years old) to women who married in the 1970s (29.6 years old). Clearly women who are entering marriage and childbearing now can expect to complete childbearing at a relatively young age. As Glick (1977) argues, childbearing is ending earlier since women are having fewer children and thereby decreasing the proportion of children born to them at later stages in their reproductive period. The median length of years between age at first birth and age at last birth was 9.9 years for women who became mothers in the 1900s and 6.9 years for women who became mothers in the 1970s. The difference in median years between age at first marriage and birth of first child has hardly varied in this century, averaging about 1.7 years. The average number of children born per ever-married mother, reaching an average high of 3.5 in the 1950s and an average low of 2.5 in the 1970s, has contributed most to this sift in childbearing patterns. The "baby boom" birth rate of the 1950s added about one child to every family only to have that trend reversed by the 1970s which reduced the average family size by about one child (Glick, 1977).

Overall, these trends in childbearing imply a number of consequences. First, the period of family building has become shorter as women have fewer children over briefer intervals. Given the shifts in the number and timing of births, younger women are devoting less years to both time spent in childbearing and childrearing. Secondly, given the increased longevity and survival rates of females, women spend more time in a period

with (or without) their husbands in the absence of children. These
changes in childbearing and childspacing have developed most in the last
two decades; in particular, the decline in fertility, accompanied by a
low level of childlessness, will probably continue throughout the remain-
der of this century.

Cohort Differences and Similarities in Childbearing

The historical trends just described are clearly evident in Table 26
which presents the proportion of women with at least one preschool child
for selected ages.[9]   A life course pattern of increased childbearing from
ages 15-25 to 25-34 is common to all three cohorts. This is followed by
a rapid decline for the years between 25-35 and 35-44 in both the middle
and oldest cohorts. The presence of preschool children peaks in early
middle adulthood and declines from that point on. Cohort differences in
life course patterns demonstrate the more obvious demographic differences
found for women who were childbearing during the 1950s (primarily the
middle cohort from about 1945 and on) versus those women who were having
children during the 1970s (primarily the youngest cohort). By way of com-
parison, the oldest cohort experienced the largest life course difference
(Ld) between the ages of 15-24 and 25-34 (47 per cent) while the youngest
cohort experienced the least Ld (30 per cent). This 17 per cent cohort
difference (Cd) is matched by the Cd found when computing the differences
between the two older cohorts from age 25-34 to 35-44. The Ld for the
middle cohort was 47 per cent while only 21 per cent for the oldest cohort.
Because of the increased birth rate for the oldest cohort, it is not
surprising that the proportion with preschool children leveled off at a
much slower pace than the middle cohort.

Looked at another way, period differences reflect the different

TABLE 26

PROPORTION OF WOMEN WITH AT LEAST ONE PRESCHOOL CHILD* AT
DIFFERENT AGES FOR BIRTH COHORTS OF
CHICAGO AREA WOMEN

Current Age	Per Cent with Preschool Child at Age:				
	15-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	N
25-34 (1943-1952)	20	50			(844)
35-44 (1933-1942)	29	63	16		(571)
45-54 (1923-1932)	21	68	37	2	(459)

*Under six years old.

childbearing patterns between the three cohorts of the study. At age 25-34, only half the 1943-1952 birth cohort had at least one preschool child compared to 63 per cent and 68 per cent respectively for the two older cohorts. The similarities for these two older cohorts disappears from ages 35-44; the proportion with at least one preschool child is twice as high for the oldest versus the middle cohort (37 per cent and 16 per cent respectively). Undoubtedly, the trend of the oldest cohort to have a greater proportion of preschool children than the middle cohort at a later age reflects the tendency of these women to have more children as mothers of the early 1950s. The already declining proportion of preschool aged children among the 1932-1943 birth cohort at ages 25-34 shows their transitional behavior as the birth rate began its downswing almost as rapidly as its upswing had begun during the late 1940s and early 1950s.

The presence of life course differences, cohort differences, period differences and age-strata differences makes the separation and identification of effects somewhat difficult. Clearly period effects and cohort effects are present; although their interaction is somewhat confounded by the presence of four observable differences. What seems to be more relevant here than in previous discussions on observable differences is the differences in size and structure of cohorts and the effects this produced with respect to both the "baby boom" and "baby bust" birth rates. It is possible that childspacing intervals, total number of children, and an extended period of childbearing past age 30 are direct cohort effects that influenced the fertility rate of the 1950s. What reversed this trend among the mothers-to-be of the 1970s appears less clear in demographic terms. The age normative and ideological influences of each decade are factors that must be looked at in order to further interpret this shift in fertility rates.

Timing and Spread of Childbearing Years

A closer look at cohort differences in the timing of and years spent in childbearing will clarify some of the actual cohort and period differences found in the previous section. Returning to Table 22, the mean ages for the timing of the first and last birth as well as the mean spread and mean number of children is presented. For the sample as a whole the mean age at first birth was 24.1 years and the mean age at last birth was 29.7 years. It is important for this discussion to note that in response to whether they were planning additional children, less than one per cent of the respondents in either the middle or oldest cohort were planning additional children. Thus, the statistics here on these two cohorts will be treated as completed fertility rates. Unfortunately, the fertility rates for the youngest cohort is truncated due to the effect of age and for that reason will not be discussed here. As expected, the oldest cohort started the transition into first birth later than the middle cohort (25.0 years to 24.0 years) and extended its last birth three years beyond that of the middle cohort (30.2 years versus 33.4 years). Overall, the middle cohort spent less years in child bearing (6.9 years) compared to the oldest cohort (9.2 years). Also women in the middle cohort had fewer children (3.2) than that of the oldest cohort (3.8). These timing differences and years spent in childbearing explain, in part, the significant period difference found between those two groups when they were both respectively aged 25 to 34 (Table 26).

The scheme of mothering history patterns is presented in Figure 10. At the time of the interview 331 women or 18 per cent of

FIGURE 10

SCHEME OF MOTHERING HISTORIES OF CHICAGO AREA WOMEN[a]

KEY
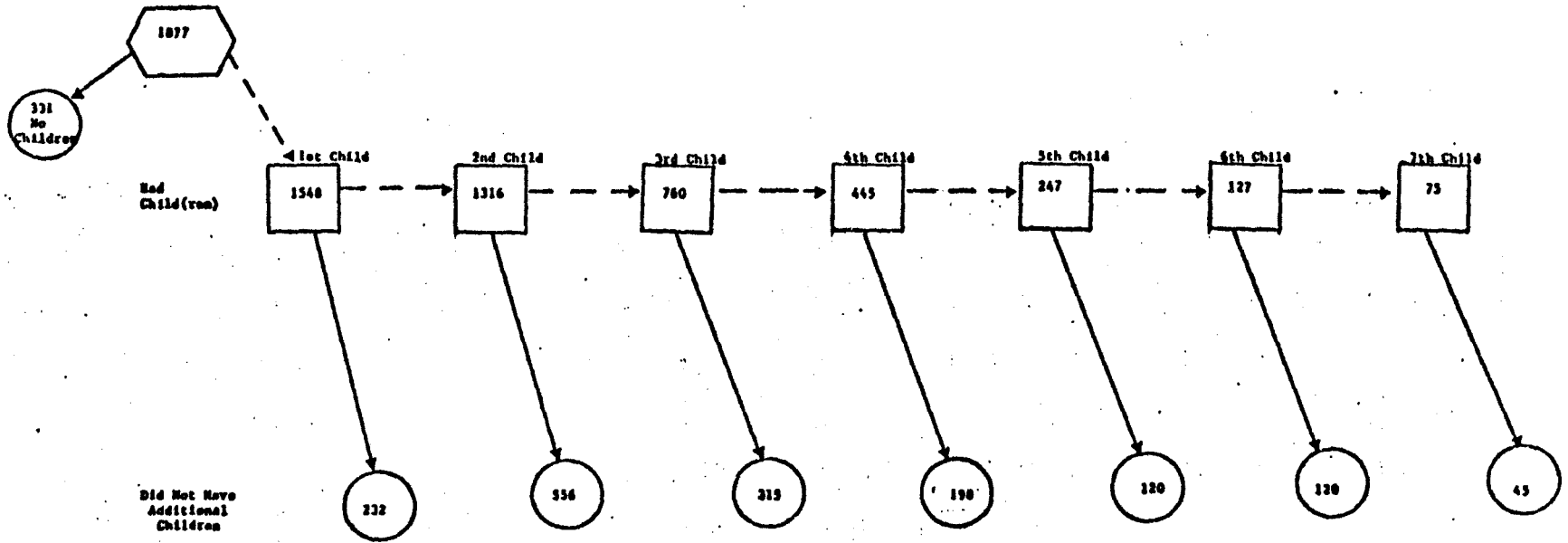
☐ Intermediate Points of Having Additional Children

○ Current Mothering History

- - - ▶ Leading to Intermediate Points of Having Additional Children

───▶ Leading to Current Mothering History

[a]Numbers in cells represent weighted cases

the sample had never had children. For the remaining 82 per cent,

this scheme shows the number of cases who went on to have up to

seven children as well as how many women stopped after each additional

child. Of the 1548 women who had a first child, 1316 went on to have

a second child (85 per cent) while 232 (15 per cent) had not yet

had any additonal children by the time of the interview. After the

second child, the proportion who continue to have an additional

child ranges only from 58 per cent to 51 per cent. Given the

completed fertility rate for the two older cohorts at over 3.0

children, one might have predicted a higher proportion of women who

went on to have a third child. Since this figure includes the

youngest cohort with their incomplete childbearing, the overall

proportion of the sample looks lower than it actually is due to the

effect of age.

Personal Characteristics Associated with Mothering History Patterns

Mothering history patterns tend to vary more by level of

completed education and parental socio-economic status than by

race (Table 27). As the literature has shown, the average number of

children born to black women has grown consistently (Norton, 1974;

Spanier and Glick, 1980). In Table 27, this trend is not readily

apparent. Since the non-white includes other racial groups aside

from blacks, the mothering activity of black women is not directly

represented. The actual fertility rate for both racial groups is

obscured since the mothering history patterns have been dichotomized

into no children and children. Consequently, the differences between

both racial groups appears virtually matched. The only major cohort

difference is between the youngest cohort in which the white group

TABLE 27

MOTHERING HISTORY PATTERNS CONTROLLING FOR SELECTED BACKGROUND CHARACTERISTICS

(Per Cent)

Mothering History Patterns	Race							
	Non-White				White			
	All Women	25-34 (1943-1952)	35-44 (1933-1942)	45-54 (1923-1932)	All Women	25-34 (1943-1952)	35-44 (1933-1942)	45-54 (1923-1932)
No Children	12	19	4	11	19	33	10	4
One or More Children	87	81	96	89	81	67	90	96
(N)	(414)	(172)	(133)	(109)	(1460)	(672)	(438)	(358)

Mothering History Patterns	Parental Socio-Economic Status							
	Low				Medium to High			
	All Women	25-34 (1943-1952)	35-44 (1933-1942)	45-54 (1923-1932)	All Women	25-34 (1943-1952)	35-44 (1933-1942)	45-54 (1923-1932)
No Children	11	19	9	6	23	36	10	6
One or More Children	89	81	91	94	76	64	90	94
(N)	(869)	(308)	(291)	(270)	(945)	(519)	(250)	(176)

Mothering History Patterns	Level of Education							
	High School or Less				Some College or More			
	All Women	25-34 (1943-1952)	35-44 (1933-1942)	45-54 (1923-1932)	All Women	25-34 (1943-1952)	35-44 (1933-1942)	45-54 (1923-1932)
No Children	8	14	6	4	30	46	14	8
One or More Children	92	86	94	96	70	54	86	92
(N)	(1085)	(423)	(362)	(300)	(790)	(421)	(209)	(157)

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has a considerably higher proportion with no children (33 per cent versus 19 per cent for non-whites). This could be accounted for given the higher and longer educational involvement of white women in comparison to non-white women. Given present trends, it is unclear if this younger white cohort will match its non-white counterparts as they live out more of their lives.

Parental socio-economic status does not appear to influence overall mothering history patterns. Women from families with a lower socio-economic status were more likely to have one or more children (89 per cent) than women from higher socio-economic backgrounds (76 per cent). This difference is most dramatic in the youngest cohort; women from higher class backgrounds are more likely to be childless during the years 25 - 34 (36 per cent) than non-white women (19 per cent).

The contrast between women who have a high school degree or less versus those women with some college or more further demonstrates the differences between the youngest cohort and the two older cohorts. Women with some college or more were three times as likely not to have children than women with a high school degree or less (30 per cent to 8 per cent). This difference in the youngest cohort appears even more dramatic, and in part, explains the behavior of this cohort when controlling for parental socio-economic status and race. The distribution of the youngest cohort by education is more similar to the other older cohorts in both educational groups. For the youngest cohort with some college or more, the distribution is nearly divided between those with no children and those with one child or more. This trend indicates the strong association between

higher educational attainment and the postponement of childbirth,

and probably marriage as well, among the youngest cohort.

CHAPTER IV

Footnotes

[1] It should be noted that the use of the word interruption in no way has a subjective meaning. It refers strictly to the stoppage of an activity.

[2] Unlike Featherman and Carter (1976) who could establish interruptions that were six months or longer, I could only measure interruptions that were at least one year in length.

[3] When separating effects, if both life course differences and period differences are measurable and significant, a period effect can be imputed. The suggestion of which effect is present is tentative evidence and by no means provides definite evidence since each effect is a perfect function of the other two.

[4] Quite frequently this data set is referred to as the Parnes Study, since it was conducted by Herbert S. Parnes, of the Center for Human Resource Research, The Ohio State University.

[5] Henretta and O'Rand (1980) present a third approach to identifying employment history patterns. They identify two types of patterns of labor force participation and withdrawal: "orderly patterns" for women who leave and do not return for the rest of their survey period; and "disorderly patterns" for women who reenter the labor force after having been out during the course of the survey period.

[6] These matched trends in employment between our sample and Department of Labor data has given us greater faith in the reliability of our data.

[7] For Table 11, only the first and second employment period statistics are presented. This decision was made, in large part, because of the few number of cases for the third, fourth and fifth employment periods. However, in order to provide some description of these employment periods, some detailed data on their age at entry, age at departure and duration of employment is presented in Tables 14, 15 and 16.

[8] The mean age at which first marriages end reflects. as does mean length of years for first marriages, this built in problem of proportion of time lived by each cohort.

Footnotes

(Continued)

[9] The reconstructed mothering histories were constructed with no children and children over 18 years collapsed into one category. For that reason, it is not possible to present a cohort table on the proportion with no children for selected ages.

CHAPTER V

LIFE COURSE PATTERNS TYPOLOGY: ANALYSES OF THE TIMING,

SEQUENCING AND DURATION OF LIFE COURSE TRANSITIONS

Life Course Patterns: Cumulative Life Experience

As presented thus far, each role involvement has a history of its
own. In terms of education, women who have returned to school at least
once since finishing full-time followed one of nine possible education-
al histories (see Figure 6, Chapter IV). A respondent could be in one
of eleven possible paid employment histories (see Figure 8, Chapter IV).
The women followed seven possible marital histories (see Figure 9,
Chapter IV) and two mothering histories were for the latter (see Figure
10,Chapter IV). As noted earlier, a methodological choice was made to
construct the life course patterns typology without education. The
extension of the student role into the middle years is a recent pheno-
menon and consequently has been limited to less than half of the sample.
Only 43 percent of the women in the study experienced the student role
beyond initial completion of full-time school. Consequently, nearly
60 percent of the respondents would have been excluded from a typology
constructed from this fourth role involvement. Clearly, education into
the middle years has more meaning with the recent expansion of institu-
tional facilities to attract individuals during adulthood. But given
the limited involvement of the total sample, only employment, marriage
and mothering have been utilized in the construction of a life course
patterns typology.

The purpose of this chapter is to move beyond the examination of each separate role history in order to analyze the relationship of these roles to one another. Analyses of the timing and sequencing of role transitions, based on cumulative lifetime involvements, permit the measurement of social change as discussed in Chapter II. In the context of the age stratification model, the goals of measuring social change are to see the experience of individuals as longitudinal and view it in cohort form. With a longitudinal view, the sequencing of role transitions as well as distribution and coordination of multiple role involvement can be charted and studied over time. This combination of multiple role involvements can vary over time since individuals manage their resources and direct their energies in different ways at different stages of the life course. Under differing social and historical cond-itions, cohorts respond with a range of strategies in which some are more prevalent than others. Manifestly, these cohort responses are reflected in aggregate differences in the timing and sequencing of life course transitions. It has been demonstrated thus far that the youngest cohort has moved through selected age strata making timing choices dif-ferently than the two older cohorts when they moved through those same selected age strata (ages 15 to 24 and 25 to 34). Educational and em-ployment decisions have had an impact on marriage and mothering beha-vior in the youngest cohort that is not reflected in the oldest cohort. This greater variety of role strategies used by the youngest cohort suggests that they will continue to reflect a distinct range of life choices based on the sequencing and timing of life course transitions.

A number of topics will be covered in this chapter. A construction of a life course patterns typology, based on cumulative life experience

is discussed first, including the prevalence of certain patterns for
each cohort (see Table 2, Chapter II). This is followed by separate
sections on the timing and the sequencing of initial life course tran-
sitions, specifically the transition into first employment period,
first marriage and age at first birth. Specific attention will be paid
to how the major modal sequences were constructed and which modal se-
quence patterns were followed by the sample and each cohort (see Table
1, Chapter II). From this individual discussion on timing and sequenc-
ing, the relationship between the two will be explored in the context
of the life course patterns typology. Eight possible role clusters
were developed to identify which role involvements were going on simul-
taneously versus those role involvements that were sequential. Finally,
this discussion of·timing, sequencing and role clustering of employment,
marriage and mothering will be followed by a presentation and discussion
of the expanded life course patterns typology with special emphasis on
cohort similarities and differences.

Construction of the Life Course Patterns Typology

In order to construct a life course patterns typology, each set of
role history patterns was recoded and combined to reflect cumulative
life experience. This first step was adopted from Uhlenberg's (1974)
construction of a female life cycle typology which integrated the cumu-
lative significance of mortality, marriage, childbearing and marital
dissolution over time. Each set of role histories was collapsed into
larger and yet discreet categories in order to capture the cumulative
significance of each variable over time. The original eleven employ-
ment history categories were collapsed into five: still in first

employment period, exited first employment period but has not returned,

currently employed with a history of two or more employment periods,

currently unemployed with a history of two or more employment periods,

and never employed. The first category represents those women who have

had a pattern of continuous employment while the second through fourth

represent discontinuous cumulative life-time patterns of employment.

The notions of continuity and discontinuity in employment have been pre-

served through the use of this coding scheme and have extended the ana-

lysis in this chapter to include descriptions of simultaneous role in-

volvements.

The marital history variable of the sample was initially collapsed

into four categories: still in first marriage, out of first marriage

and not currently married, out of first marriage and currently remar-

ried, and never married (see Tables 23, 24 and 25 in Chapter IV).

Additional analyses showed that current marital status is an important

variable. However, whether or not a woman's first marriage ended appear-

ed to be a more important factor for cumulative life experience than

how many times she remarried. Consequently, the second and third cate-

gories were combined to create a single category of out of first mar-

riage. The original dichotomy of no children and one or more children

for mothering histories was retained for use in the construction of the

typology.

This recoding process resulted in thirty possible combinations of

cumulative life experience of employment, marriage and mothering. The

distribution of cases for the thirty combinations (see Appendix B)

determined the selection of nine modal categories to construct the

initial life course patterns typology. These nine combinations capture

the cumulative life experiences of 85 per cent of the sample (N = 1605);
the remaining 15 per cent of the sample have experienced the 21 combina-
tions not included for use in the typology. The per cent distribution
of these nine categories for the sample and for each birth cohort appear
in Table 28. The most common life course pattern these women were likely
to have was: currently employed with a history of two or more paid work
periods, an intact first marriage and one or more children (24 per cent). In only
three patterns were the women not currently employed. In four out of
six patterns where women were currently employed, this was their first
work period, i.e. they were continuous workers. The second largest cate-
gory was similar to the first except that these women had entered the
labor force only once and had not reentered by the time of the inter-
view. Across cohorts, there appears to be an inverse relationship for
these two patterns: the oldest cohort has the largest proportion in
the first pattern (36 per cent), whereas the youngest cohort has the
largest proportion in the second pattern (27 per cent). The effect of
age partially explains this finding. The older women, because of their
longer lives, have had more time to move in and out of the labor force
and respond to economic needs and/or career choices.

It is not surprising in view of the effect of age and the findings
discussed in the previous chapter, that more women in the pattern of
being currently in first employment period, never married, with no chil-
dren are in the youngest cohort (11 per cent) as are those women who are
in their first work period and in their first marriage with no children
(nine per cent). One might predict that as the youngest cohort lives
out more of their lives, they will fall more and more into the first
and second life course patterns. However, the youngest and middle

TABLE 28

DISTRIBUTION OF LIFE COURSE PATTERNS BASED ON CUMULATIVE LIFE EXPERIENCE
FOR BIRTH COHORTS OF CHICAGO AREA WOMEN

Pattern	All Women	(N)	25-34 (1923-1932)	35-44 (1933-1942)	45-54 (1943-1954)
In LF--2 Work Periods or More In 1st Marriage--1 Child or More	24	(391)	17	25	36
Out LF--Only 1 Work Period In 1st Marriage--1 Child or More	20	(322)	27	16	14
Out LF-2 Work Periods or More In 1st Marriage--1 Child or More	16	(264)	12	21	17
In LF--2 Work Periods or More Out 1st Marriage--1 Child or More	11	(174)	8	11	16
Out LF--2 Work Periods or More Out 1st Marriage--1 Child or More	8	(120)	6	10	8
In 1st Work Period--Never Married No Children	6	(97)	11	3	2
In 1st Work Period-- In 1st Marriage--1 Child or More	6	(91)	5	6	5
In 1st Work Period-- In 1st Marriage--no Children	5	(74)	9	2	0
In 1st Work Period-- Out 1st Marriage-1 Child or More	4	(72)	4	6	3
(N)		(1605)	(674)	(520)	(411)

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cohorts currently show a greater variety of involvement with different cumulative life course patterns than does the oldest cohort.

Timing of Initial Life Course Transitions: First Employment
Period, First Marriage and Age at First Birth

The timing of initial life course transitions into adulthood is often predictive of life-time involvement with that role. A pattern of off-time entry (early or late) into a role often means a continuation of this pattern throughout adulthood. The significance of the timing of a single event is often measured in terms of its impact and causal relation to other life course events and career lines (Hogan, 1978; Winsborough, 1979). In this research, differentiation of the patterns within the typology were first measured by using the median timing of the event for the entire sample in relation to its respective role history. This is followed by an analysis of the timing of each initial role transition for each pattern of the cumulative life experiences typology.

As discussed in the previous chapter, by cohort there was little variation in the timing of entry into the first employment period; rather, timing variations for this paid work period were based on whether employment was continuous or discontinuous. The strong relationship between early labor force attachment and life-time employment experience (Blau, 1975; Young, 1978) demonstrates that timing of entry into employment is necessary for further understanding the relationship between the first phase of a woman's paid working life and later labor market experience. It could be argued that the earlier a woman timed her first period of employment, the more likely she is to have

experienced a discontinuous employment history throughout her middle
years. The evidence presented in Table 29 supports this argument.
Looking only at the per cent of women who timed their transition into
the labor force at the median age or younger, it is clear that those
women with two employment periods or more, whether currently employed
or not, had a much higher proportion who started paid work at the median
age or younger (60 per cent and 69 per cent, respectively) than those
women still in their first employment period (38 per cent). This dif-
ference is true across all cohorts, and appears most striking for the
oldest cohort (note the 53 per cent difference between those women still
in their first employment period versus those women currently unemployed
with two or more work periods). Women with more discontinous and dis-
·rupted employment histories were much more likely to have timed their
entry into employment on or before the age of 20. The age a woman in-
itiates her transition into paid work is significant since she will
more likely be in her first employment period as a continuous worker
if she started later than the median age. This timing difference can
be partially accounted for by the sequence of other initial life course
transitions. Specifically, whether she decided to extend her involve-
ment in school or if she decided to get married and have children prior
to employment are sequences that can influence overall timing. From
Table 29, timing of the initial paid work transition on or before the
median is strongly related to cumulative employment histories; this
is also true for the timing of the transition into the first marriage.

Whether a woman starts her first marriage on or before age 22 is
related to whether or not she will experience marital dissolution and
remarriage (see Table 30; also for evidence of the relationship between

TABLE 29

PER CENT WHO ENTER LABOR FORCE AT MEDIAN AGE (20) OR YOUNGER BY
EMPLOYMENT HISTORIES OF CHICAGO AREA WOMEN[a]

Employment History Pattern	All Women	(N)	25-34 (1943-1952)	(N)	35-44 (1933-1942)	(N)	45-54 (1923-1932)	(N)
Still in First Employment Period	38	(369)	40	(228)	42	(100)	20	(41)
Exit First Employment Period	56	(384)	50	(214)	62	(96)	68	(74)
Two or More Employment Periods-- Currently in Labor Force	60	(662)	54	(247)	64	(199)	64	(216)
Two or More Employment Periods-- Currently out of Labor Force	69	(415)	66	(134)	70	(166)	73	(115)

[a]In the instance of first employment period, the distribution had a skewness value of 8.28. The mean
was age 21.0 and the median age 20.0. Given the high degree of skewedness for first employment period,
the median been selected for presentation here.

TABLE 30

PER CENT WHO ENTER FIRST MARRIAGE AT MEDIAN AGE (22) OR
YOUNGER BY MARITAL HISTORIES OF CHICAGO AREA WOMEN[a]

(Per Cent)

	All Women	(N)	25-34 (1943-1952)	(N)	35-44 (1933-1942)	(N)	45-54 (1923-1932)	(N)
Marital History Pattern								
Still in First Marriage	47	(1233)	47	(550)	52	(377)	42	(306)
Out of First Marriage-- Not Currently Married	49	(304)	80	(107)	61	(114)	68	(83)
Out of First Marriage-- Currently Married	89	(149)	96	(52)	91	(47)	80	(50)

[a]Mean age and median age were both 22.

age at marriage and marital dissolution see Carter and Glick, 1976).

For the sample as a whole, there is no difference between the per cent

of women married at the mean age or younger for either women still

in their first marriage or out of their first marriage but not currently

married. Women who have ended their first marriage and have remarried

have the largest per cent who marry at the mean age or younger (89 per

cent). Using census data, Spanier and Glick (1980) found a consistent

tendency for remarried women, independent of educational level, to be

two years younger at first marriage than women married only once. This

finding is evidenced here, given the high proportion of remarried women

who marry earlier than later.

By cohort these overall sample differences do not hold. In the two

older cohorts, the distributions are more even, with those still in

their first marriage having the lowest proportion who marry at the mean

age or younger. But as expected, women in these cohorts who are remar-

ried had the highest proportion who married early for their first mar-

riage. The tendency among remarried women to have a younger age at first

marriage further documents the positive relationship between early age

at marriage and the propensity for marital dissolution. Consequently,

if a woman enters her first marriage later than the mean age, she is

more likely to keep her first marriage intact.

The proportion who enter before or at the mean age represent, in

the aggregate, how quickly it takes that cohort to move into that role

by a specified age. In order to understand the cumulative significance

of the transition into all three roles, mean ages and standard devia-

tions have been computed for each transition for all categories within

the typology (Table 31). For the first pattern within the typology, all

TABLE 31

MEAN AGES OF TRANSITIONS INTO EMPLOYMENT, MARRIAGE AND MOTHERHOOD FOR LIFE COURSE
PATTERNS TYPOLOGY BASED ON CUMULATIVE LIFE EXPERIENCE

	Age Entered First Employment Period		Age Entered First Marriage		Age at First Birth		
	Mean	Standard Deviation	Mean	Standard Deviation	Mean	Standard Deviation	(N)
In Labor Force--2 Work Periods or More In First Marriage--1 Child or More	20.2	2.5	22.8	3.3	24.8	3.8	(391)
Out of Labor Force-Only 1 Work Period In First Marriage-1 Child or More	20.8	3.7	23.1	3.4	25.1	4.0	(322)
Out of Labor Force- 2 Work Periods or More In First Marriage-1 Child or More	20.1	2.2	23.0	2.8	25.4	3.6	(264)
In Labor Force-2 Work Periods of More Out of First Marriage-1 Child or More	20.3	2.8	21.5	4.2	23.2	4.4	(174)
Out of Labor Force-2Work Periods or More Out of First Marriage-1 Child or More	19.7	2.5	20.8	3.2	21.7	3.3	(120)
In First Work Period Never Married-No Children	22.7	3.1	. . .	. . .	. . .	. . .	(97)
In First Work Period In First Marriage-1 Child or More	26.3	8.2	21.4	3.6	22.8	3.9	(91)
In First Work Period In First Marriage-No Children	21.6	2.6	25.8	4.6	. . .	. . .	(74)
In First Work Period Out of First Marriage-1 Child or More	22.6	5.5	20.5	3.2	22.7	4.1	(72)

three transitions occured on the median. Thus, women currently in the labor force with two or more employment periods, still in their first marriage, and with one or more children represent the most "typical" experience in terms of timing initial life course transitions. Women whose cumulative life experience places them currently out of the labor force after two or more work periods and out of their first marriage with at least one child timed their initial life course transitions at the youngest mean ages. Again Spanier and Glick (1980) found early timing on one life course transition hastens the early timing of other life course events. They enter paid work earlier, marriage earlier and start their families well below the median.

Mean ages at timing of initial life course transition for the first five patterns of the typology reveal a uniform sequencing of these life events: employment precedes marriage which precedes motherhood. However, women still in their first employment period with one or more children, regardless of marital status, have sequenced marriage and motherhood prior to labor force participation. This patterning of life events suggests a far more traditional life course pattern among these two groups. Apparently, paid work occured subsequently to extended involvement with family roles.

The spread of mean years, computed by the difference in mean age from entry into the first transition and entry into the last of these transitions, reveals some dramatic information about women out of their first marriage. For women with their first marriage still intact, the spread of mean years ranges from 4.3 years to 5.3 years from first transition to third transition. In contrast, for women out of their first marriage, the spread of mean years is significant-

ly lower, ranging from only 2.0 years to 2.9 years. Again, it is
apparent that women who enter early into their first marriage
are more likely to accelerate their transition into other initial
life events given their briefer span of time to complete all three
transitions. Table 31 also indicates that those women who ended their
first marriage, who entered the labor force before marriage, started
their first paid work at the median age or younger.

Sequencing of Initial Life Course Transitions

As important as timing is in determining the direction of in-
dividual careers across the life course, sequencing of life events
is equally essential for interpreting the prevalence of certain
life course patterns. How women order life events interacts
considerably with when they time those events. This interaction
produces wide ranging variation for women who combine multiple roles
throughout adulthood.

Timing and sequencing are behaviors that often emerge in response
to pressures for individual change or are direct responses to societal
dynamics. An individual's career, reflected in the timing and
sequencing of life events, is often aimed at coordinating life
choices with the demands and constraints of limited resources and
larger societal processes. At the aggregate level, the duration and
pace of life course transitions shows how cohorts accelerate or
decelerate transitions in response to societal dynamics. Often the
pace of a transition, viewed solely in terms of timing, obscures the
variation in sequencing of life events. For example, an increase in
age at first marriage may indicate women are marrying later, but this
shift in age at marriage could be the result of a variation of how

certain events are sequenced in the aggregate: completion of education then marriage, or completion of education then labor force activity then marriage, or labor force activity then some additional education then marriage. All three sequencing possibilities could produce timing variations that raise the age at first marriage. The interaction of this synchronization of timing and sequencing of life course events requires specific attention.

Every possible sequencing combination that occured was identified for each respondent by using the age at which each initial life course transition was started (see Appendix C). The sequences were initially conceptualized to include all three transitions. However, additional analyses revealed that some women experienced only one or two transitions and would have to be included. The six largest modal categories were selected for analysis from the total twenty possible sequences; this represented 81 per cent of the sample (1513 cases). In Table 32, the distribution for these six modal sequences demonstrates that the overall conventional sequencing pattern is labor force-marriage-motherhood. Two variations of this sequence are also included among these modal patterns: labor force and marriage in the same year, then motherhood; and labor force, then marriage and motherhood in the same year.[1] The effect of age partially explains the low proportion of women in the youngest cohort who experienced the labor force-marriage-motherhood sequences; it also explains their high representation in sequences that included only one and two initial life course transitions but not a third. Given the dramatic trend of increased labor force participation among the youngest cohort, it is unlikely that they could increase their pro-

TABLE 32

DISTRIBUTION OF MODAL SEQUENCES OF LIFE COURSE PATTERNS
FOR BIRTH COHORTS OF CHICAGO AREA WOMEN

Modal Squences	All Women	25-34 (1943-1952)	35-44 (1933-1942)	45-54 (1923-1932)
Labor Force-Marriage-Motherhood	55	45	59	66
Labor Force-Marriage in Same Year, Then Motherhood	15	17	15	13
Labor Force Only	10	17	5	4
Labor Force-Marriage Only	9	16	6	2
Marriage-Motherhood-Labor Force	6	3	9	8
Labor Force, then Marriage-Motherhood	5	3	6	7
(N)	(1513)	(650)	(477)	(386)

portion in the marriage-motherhood-labor force sequence to the pro-
portion experienced by the two older cohorts, even with the passage of
time.

The relationship and interaction of sequencing and timing is
further elaborated in Table 33. For women who follow the conven-
tional modal sequence of labor force-marriage-motherhood, the mean
spread of years from first to last transition is 6.0 years. However,
this group timed both their age at first marriage and age at first
birth later than the median ages of the sample. This is in contrast
to those who had a marriage-motherhood-labor force sequence; they
entered their first employment period later and married earlier than
any other sequence group. In fact, the mean spread of years from
first marriage to first paid work period was nearly ten years - the
longest period of time between any two transistions for any group.

Women who have experienced only the transition into paid
employment, aside from those who married first, have the highest
age at first entry (22.8). This mean age places them well beyond
the average of the sample and coincides with the age at which
most people complete college. Clearly, this suggests that these
women postponed their entry into employment in order to complete
college. Although one might have predicted that those who have
been employed first and then married without children to be similar to
those who have only been employed, they are two very different types
of women. Those who have been only employed and married had an age at
first marriage later than any other sequence group (25.8 years). But
what makes them different from those women who have only worked is
their much lower mean age at initial employemnt (20.6). This suggests

TABLE 33

MEAN AGES OF TRANSITION INTO EMPLOYMENT, MARRIAGE AND MOTHERHOOD FOR MODAL
SEQUENCES OF LIFE COURSE PATTERNS

Modal Sequence:	Age Entered First Employment Period		Age Entered First Marriage		Age at First Birth		
	Mean	Standard Deviation	Mean	Standard Deviation	Mean	Standard Deviation	(N)
Labor Force--Marriage--Motherhood	19.7	2.1	23.4	3.3	25.7	3.7	(826)
Labor Force--Marriage in Same Year, Then Motherhood	20.9	2.1	20.9	2.1	23.3	2.9	(231)
Labor Force Only	22.2	3.2	. . .	. . .	. . .	. . .	(152)
Labor Force--Marriage Only	20.6	2.0	25.8	4.9	. . .	. . .	(136)
Marriage--Motherhood--Labor Force	28.6	7.0	19.0	1.9	21.1	2.9	(94)
Labor Force, then Marriage-- Motherhood Same Year	19.3	2.2	22.6	2.8	22.6	2.8	(73)

that these women might have had some college prior to leaving full-time school, but overall they were employed earlier and with less education.

Relationship of Sequencing and Timing to Duration of First Employment Period

Certain methodological problems emerge for measuring overlap or simultaneous involvement with different roles when interpreting this data on the sequencing of initial life course transitions. In response to this problem, Modell, et.al. (1976), have developed a measurement of age congruity which indicates the degree of overlap between the spread of two transitions. Conversely, age incongruity indicates the lack of overlap between the spreads of two transitions. In their research, spread refers to the time period it takes a fixed porportion of a population to undergo a specific transition. Spread, in the context of this study, has been measured as the difference in mean years from one transition to a later specified transition. Despite this difference in the measurement of the spread of years between transitions, the notion of age congruity has useful application here. From the data presented thus far on both the typology based on cumulative life experience and on modal sequencing patterns, the overlap of transitions can not be determined. For instance, from the analysis performed on women who have the cumulative life experience of currently in their first employment period, out of first marriage and with one child or more, there is no indication as to whether she was involved in the roles of employee, wife and mother simultaneously, or if she possibly only entered paid employment after the dissolution of her first marriage. Similarly, when analyzing modal sequences

such as labor force-marriage-motherhood, it is clear which preceded
which but there is no direct way of measuring whether she stayed
on at her first job while she married, or if she stopped paid work
and then got married. In other words, to determine the overlap or
degree of age congruity into these first major life transitions
requires additional information -- duration of involvement.

The pattern of employment for each modal sequence pattern were
analyzed in order to understand the degree of either age congruity
or incongruity (Table 34). Given the findings presented up to now, it
is not surprising that women who experienced the conventional pattern
of labor force-marriage-motherhood, or any of its variations, had
the highest proportion of discontinuous workers. The mean length
of years for that first employment period ranged from 3.6 mean years
to 5.9 mean years; women who were married and had children in the
same year had the briefest first paid work period. The mean length
of employment ranged from 13.5 mean years to 19.6 mean years for
continuous employees in these same three sequence patterns; these are
the women who continued to be employed as they married and had children.
They, in turn, experienced total age congruity for all three role
transitions. Those with discontinuous employment probably experi-
enced some age incongruity since the span of the mean years of their
first employment period did not extend into their transition of
first birth.

The least predictable result in Table 34 is the even distribu-
tion between continuous and discontinuous employees who experienced
the marriage-motherhood-labor force sequence. Since these women
had a mean starting age of 28.6 for their first job, one might

TABLE 34

DISTRIBUTION AND MEAN YEARS FOR DURATION OF FIRST EMPLOYMENT PERIOD BY
CONTINUOUS AND DISCONTINUOUS WORKERS FOR MODAL SEQUENCES
OF LIFE COURSE PATTERNS

| Modal Sequence | Per Cent Distribution | | | Duration in Mean Years | | | | | |
| | | | | Continuous | | | Discontinuous | | |
	Continuous	Discontinuous	(N)	Mean	Standard Deviation	(N)	Mean	Standard Deviation	(N)
Labor Force-Marriage- Motherhood	6	94	(826)	19.6	7.4	(47)	5.9	3.8	(779)
Labor Force- Marriage Same Year then Motherhood	7	93	(231)	13.5	7.6	(17)	3.6	3.8	(214)
Labor Force Only	63	37	(155)	10.4	6.8	(98)	5.4	4.2	(57)
Labor Force- Marriage Only	56	44	(136)	11.8	6.6	(76)	4.9	3.6	(60)
Marriage-Motherhood- Labor Force	50	50	(94)	9.3	5.5	(47)	6.3	5.2	(47)
Labor Force then Marriage- Motherhood Same Year	15	85	(73)	16.5	9.4	(11)	5.2	4.2	(62)

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expect that as with most continuous workers, once they finally entered the labor force they were prepared to stay. For these women, age incongruity has the most meaning because they first entered the labor force well after they had completed their transition into first marriage and then first child.

Combined Role Involvements at Different Life Course Stages

The notions of age congruity and age incongruity apply only to the time required by a cohort to complete a transition; or in this case, the mean age by which the "average" member of a cohort experiences that transition. Complementary to the notion of age congruity and incongruity is that of combined role involvements over time. The relationship of the timing of an initial transition to life-time involvment in a role has been documented in the previous chapter. Also mentioned was the reversible nature of · many roles: entry into a status does not preclude subsequent departure. In order to construct an expanded life course patterns typology that reflects this movement of discontinuous involvement as well as the timing and sequencing of initial life course transitions, all possible combinations of all three roles were explored to determine aggregate involvement with all roles at selected critical ages. The data presented in Tables 35 and Table 36 do not account for differences in timing, sequencing or duration of life course transitions; rather, they demonstrate the shifting multiple role involvements women have from one life stage to the next. The goal of the final section of this chapter will be to include all four types of measures into an expanded life course patterns typology for women that portrays the timing and sequences of initial transitions of adulthood in combina-

tion with sensitivity to multiple role involvements at selected time periods.

Upon close examination, Table 35 demonstrates the significant shifting of multiple role combinations from early adulthood to later adulthood. Most women are not involved with any of the three roles at age 19 (37 per cent) because of their involvement with full-time school, or they are employed but not married or mothers (34 per cent). Both of these role combinations have their highest proportion of involvement at age 19 and from that point on experience a steady decline. As involvement with only school declines or involvement with only labor force participation declines, two other role combinations experience a steady increase which peaks during the sample's thirties: not employed-married-child under 17 and employed-married-child under 17. At all ages, the former combination has a higher proportion that the latter which indicates that women, at least through their thirties, are more likely to be not employed than employed while they have preschool and young school ages children. The proportion of women who are not employed who are married with children peaks at age 34 (54 per cent) and then steadily declines throughout their forties. Similarly, the employees who are married with children peaks slightly later at ages 39 and 44 (37 per cent) and then steadily falls off. It appears that these women move out of their active involvement with mothering by their late forties and early fifties given the notable increase of both role combinations of employed and not employed, married with no child at ages 49 and 54. In fact the role combination of employed, married with no children has the greatest fluctuation hitting one peak at age 25, falling off

TABLE 35

COMBINED ROLE INVOLVEMENTS AT DIFFERENT AGES FOR CHICAGO AREA WOMEN*

(Per Cent)

Role Involvement Combinations:	Selected Ages:										
	Age 19	Age 21	Age 23	Age 25	Age 27	Age 29	Age 34	Age 39	Age 44	Age 49	Age 54
Not Employed-Not Married- Child Under 17	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	1	4	4
Not Employed-Not Married- No Child*	37	22	12	7	5	3	1	1	2	2	1
Employed-Not Married- Child Under 17	1	2	3	4	3	3	4	7	6	4	1
Employed-Not Married- No Child*	34	28	22	18	15	13	7	5	4	5	6
Not Employed-Married- Child Under 17	9	17	25	33	41	48	54	47	39	28	33
Not Employed-Married- No Child*	5	9	5	5	4	2	1	1	4	10	11
Employed-Married- Child Under 17	4	8	13	16	18	22	27	37	37	22	11
Employed-Married- No Child*	9	12	18	15	12	6	4	3	7	25	32
(N)	(1644)	(1718)	(1814)	(1863)	(1647)	(1502)	(1202)	(771)	(568)	(251)	(72)

*No Child includes children 18 years and older in addition to women who never had children

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throughout the thirties and forties, and then peaking at an even
higher proportion for ages 49 and 54 (25 per cent) and 32 per cent
respectively).

Certain role combinations are clearly less prevalent than others;
regardless of employment status, not married with children under
seventeen has hardly varied across the time span of Table 35. The
only noteworthy shift appears to be the increase of women employed, not
married with children at ages 39 and 44. This could be attributed to
the previously noted increase in the incidence of divorce at this
life stage for the sample.

Overall, it appears that by the late twenties there is a less
dispersed distribution among the different role clusters as women con-
centrate in two modal combinations that vary only by their employ-
ment status. During their thirties the proportion in these two
clusters becomes even more dramatic, although women who are not
employed, but wives and mothers, peaks earlier and declines more
gradually than it does for women who are employed. By the late
forties, women in the sample are dispersed more uniformly across
four modal clusters. What is common to all four is that the women
married, and the proportions employed versus unemployed are virtually
matched. Patterns of discontinuous role involvement seem more
apparent as many women remove themselves from one role involvement
to become involved with another.

The difference in role clustering by cohort for these same
selected ages further demonstrates how differently the older and
middle corhorts behaved during their twenties when compared to the
youngest cohort during their twenties (Table 36). At age 19, the

TABLE 36

COMBINED ROLE INVOLVEMENTS AT DIFFERENT AGES FOR THREE
COHORTS OF CHICAGO AREA WOMEN

(Per Cent)

	Combined Role Involvements at Selected Age								
	Not Employed				Employed				
	Not Married		Married		Not Married		Married		
Selected Age:	No Child	Child	No Child	Child	No Child	Child	No Child	Child	(N)
Age 19:									
Cohort 25–34	45	1	2	8	30	2	9	3	(702)
35–44	31	2	6	11	34	1	9	5	(505)
45–54	31	1	7	9	40	0	8	3	(437)
Age 21:									
Cohort 25–34	30	2	9	14	23	3	12	7	(752)
35–44	16	2	6	20	31	1	14	9	(527)
45–54	16	2	12	19	34	1	9	6	(439)
Age 23:									
Cohort 25–34	17	2	2	18	22	3	21	14	(816)
35–44	10	2	6	31	22	2	14	13	(549)
45–54	7	1	9	31	22	2	16	10	(449)
Age 27:									
Cohort 25–34	9	2	6	25	16	5	20	17	(625)
35–44	2	2	3	46	14	1	8	25	(566)
45–54	3	2	2	57	14	2	7	13	(456)
Age 29:									
Cohort 25–34	5	4	2	31	18	4	9	28	(487)
35–44	2	2	2	52	12	3	5	23	(559)
45–54	3	2	2	61	10	3	5	15	(456)
Age 39:									
Cohort 35–44	0	2	2	42	5	11	4	35	(319)
45–54	1	2	1	50	5	4	2	34	(452)
Age 49:									
Cohort 45–54	2	4	10	28	5	4	25	22	(251)

youngest cohort had the highest proportion involved in school (45 per cent). By age 21, the shift out of full-time schooling dropped most dramatically for the two older cohorts to 16 per cent, while the youngest cohort had nearly double that proportion still in school (30 per cent). The shift at ages 23 and 27 shows that the youngest cohort did not follow the trend of the older cohorts by moving as quickly into the role cluster of married with children but not employed. At age 23, only 18 per cent of the youngest cohort were in that role combination compared to 31 per cent for both of the older cohorts; by age 27 the youngest cohort had increased their involvement with full-time homemaking by seven per cent (up to 25 per cent) compared to 46 per cent and 57 per cent respectively for the two older cohorts. The youngest cohort continued at ages 23 and 27 as wives who were employed but did not have children (24 per cent and 30 per cent at those two ages). The youngest cohort reached age 29, they moved into the role of employed mother in equal proportion to · those who chose to leave the labor force to become mothers (28 per cent and 31 per cent for each respective group).

The similarities between the middle and oldest cohort remained constant throughout their twenties and thirties, although the middle cohort displayed some of its transitional behavior with respect to employment. For instance, at age 27, it could be argued that the middle cohort was first to combine employment with marriage and mothering given its high proportion in that role cluster (25 per cent) at that age. Also due to the higher incidence of divorce in the group, 11 per cent were not married but employed with children by age 39. Overall, more women aged 35-44 were employed

during their thirties than women aged 45-54 during that same age range.

Expanded Life Course Patterns Typology

Three overall patterns of behavior have emerged throughout this analysis on both the timing and sequencing of initial life course transitions and the typology based on cumulative life experience: sequential patterns of role involvement, fluctuating patterns of role involvement, and continuous patterns of employment. In the three patterns there are various types which follow the overall pattern of involvement, but each type has some differentiating behavior with respect to timing or sequencing or cumulative life experience. Uhlenberg's (1974) typology was based solely on cumulative life experience and has been used in the development of the life course pattern typology based on cumulative experience. Equally valuable has been Elder and Rockwell's (1976) research on the worklife patterns. In their study of a 1925-1929 female cohort, they investigated the main effects of marital age on women's employment and found four patterns of work life for these women. They first found a "conventional" pattern of work life that was followed by women who were never employed or employed only up to marriage or the birth of their first child. The "double-track" pattern they found included women who reentered the paid work force shortly after the birth of each child and continued working while women in the "interrupted" pattern reentered the labor force at a much later stage in their marriage. Finally, the "unstable" pattern of work life was typified by women who moved back and forth between paid employment and full-time homemaking. Looking at the life course of brides and

the timing of their marriages and employment, Elder and Rockwell found most women with double-track patterns married early (under age 19) while women with conventional worklife patterns married late (over age 22). Overall marital instability was concentrated among young brides and related to their early and disrupted pattern of labor force involvement throughout adulthood.

The value of Elder and Rockwell's worklife patterns lies in their identification of timing in both marriage and employment, although their emphasis has been on the determinants and consequences of age at marriage. Their overall conceptualization (rather than exact measurements) of worklife patterns is particularly useful in this discussion of the expanded life course patterns typology since the typology has been developed from patterns of employment histories rather than involvement with familial role histories.

Sequential patterns of role involvement refer to transition experiences in which there is minimal overlap between the transition into the labor force and the transition into familial role involvements. Specifically, there are two types of women who follow the sequential pattern: first, those who follow the "conventional" routes (as described by Elder and Rockwell) who are employed only up to marriage or their first child; and,second, those who follow a more traditional "delayed" pattern of first marriage and motherhood, postponing their labor force entry until much later in their familial history. Women in each group were well into paid work roles or familial roles prior to their involvement with the other. Women with a conventional worklife include only those respondents with a cumulative life experience of currently not employed, in first

marriage with one or more children, and who followed a sequence of either
labor force-marriage-motherhood or labor force, then marriage-motherhood
in the same year. This conventional pattern appears very clearly in
Table 37; for all women who experienced this cumulative life experience
pattern, 92 per cent experienced either one of the two specified sequences.
(73 per cent and 19 per cent respectively). Women who were classified
as having a delayed worklife pattern were in their first employment per-
iod, whether in or out of their first marriage, with one or more children
and followed the modal sequence of marriage-motherhood-labor force. This
means that these women had begun their first paid work period only after mar-
riage and motherhood, on the average around age 28 as previously shown
in Table 33. As common and traditional as this pattern is thought to be,
it is more common among women who sequence family roles and paid work
roles without overlap to have some experience as an employee prior to
marriage and motherhood.

The fluctuating pattern has two specific types as well: the "double-
track" worklife is already described by Elder and Rockwell, although the
time after each birth before returning to paid work is not their only
feature, and the sporadic worklife for women who, due to the dissolution
of their first marriage appear to work more erratically. The double-track
worklife is followed by women who have followed any of the three variations
of the labor force-marriage-motherhood sequence and have followed the two
cumulative life experiences of either in or out of the labor force with
an employment history of two or more employment periods, in first marri-
age with one or more children. The total per cent in each life exper-
ience group who follow any of those three sequences are 96 per cent and

TABLE 37

MODAL SEQUENCES BY LIFE COURSE PATTERNS BASED ON CUMULATIVE LIFE EXPERIENCE FOR CHICAGO AREA WOMEN
(Per Cent)

Patterns:	Modal Sequences:						
	Labor Force– Marriage– Motherhood	Labor Force– Marriage Same Year, then Motherhood	Labor Force Only	Labor Force– Marriage Only	Marriage– Motherhood– Labor Force	Labor Force, then Marriage Motherhood Same Year	(N)
In Labor Force––2 Work Periods or More In First Marriage–1 Child or More	72	16	1	1	3	8	(347)
Out of Labor Force–Only 1 Work Period In First Marriage–1 Child or More	73	19	0	1	5	3	(290)
Out of Labor Force– 2 Work Periods or More In First Marriage–1 Child or More	77	18	0	1	0	4	(246)
In Labor Force–2 Work Periods of More Out of First Marriage–1 Child or More	53	33	0	2	8	4	(133)
Out of Labor Force–2 Work Periods or More Out of First Marriage–1 Child or More	64	17	0	0	12	6	(81)
In First Work Period Never Married–No Children	0	0	100	0	0	0	(97)
In First Work Period In First Marriage–1 Child or More	37	10	0	0	42	11	(71)
In First Work Period In First Marriage–No Children	0	0	0	100	0	0	(56)
In First Work Period Out of First Marriage–1 Child or More	40	19	0	4	32	6	(53)

99 per cent, respectively as listed above. Sporadic workers had the same
cumulative employment and mothering histories as double-track workers,
but they are distinguished by the fact that their first marriage ended.
These two groups (fourth and fifth in the cumulative experience typology)
were more dispersed among three major sequences: labor force-marriage-
motherhood, labor force then marriage and motherhood in the same year,
and marriage-motherhood-labor force. The effect of marital dissolution
on employment histories is particularly evident by the reduced proportion
who follow the two major modal sequences. Certainly marital dissolution
influences the choice women make to return to the labor force given in-
creased economic pressures, often as a single head of household. Also
the strong relationship between marital dissolution and early marriage
suggests that worklife patterns for these women also start earlier and
are probably less likely to be tied to childbearing, as it is for women
with double-track worklives.

The women with continuous patterns of employment are those women
who entered the labor force and never married or those who married but
do not have children. In this instance the women with the two cumulative
life experiences and those with the two modal sequences are the same
(Table 37). Again, the prevalence of women who follow this worklife
pattern will probably reduce with age as the younger women choose to
marry and have children even as they continue to work.

The distribution for these patterns by sample and by cohort are
shown in Table 38. The effect of age is clearly present among women with
simultaneous worklife patterns. The effect of age is clearly seen in
the high proportion of women in the youngest cohort who have been con-
tinuously employed. Most likely with the passage of time, their proportion

TABLE 38

EXPANDED LIFE COURSE PATTERNS TYPOLOGY FOR
BIRTH COHORTS OF CHICAGO AREA WOMEN

(Per Cent)

		Birth Cohorts:		
	All Women	25-34 (1923-1932)	35-44 (1933-1942)	45-54 (1943-1952)
Simultaneous Patterns				
Continuous-- Labor Force Only	8	14	4	2
Continuous-- Labor Force and Marriage	4	9	2	1
Sequential Patterns				
Conventional	22	31	17	13
Delayed	4	2	5	4
Fluctuating Patterns				
Double-Track	46	31	52	60
Sporadic	17	12	19	21
(N)	(1263)	(510)	(406)	(347)

in this pattern will decrease as they adopt multiple role involvements in a more similar fashion to women who have followed sequential and fluctuating worklife patterns. The high proportion of the youngest cohort in the conventional pattern also reflects the effect of age. Since the conventional pattern is made up of women who have exprienced labor force involvement proir to marriage and mothering, it is more likely that these women will eventually return to the labor force to start a second employment period -- probably some time during their thirties. This means that the proportion of the youngest cohort who have a conventional worklife pattern will decrease as the proportion who have a double-track or sporadic pattern increases. The lower proportion of the middle and oldest cohort in the conventional pattern signifies the fact that these older women are not staying at home as their childrearing commitments diminish. Rather, they are more likely to take on a double-track worklife pattern returning to work after the birth of each child or after their completed childbearing. The sporadic workers are most prevalent in the two older cohorts. Again, it is possible to argue that the effect of age has influenced the distribution of women who fall into this group. And yet, the difference between these two cohorts and the youngest cohort is not as dramatic as one might expect based on the effect of age. One might predict that the youngest cohort, as they live out more of their lives, will reach or pass the proportions of the older cohorts in adapting a sporadic worklife pattern.

CHAPTER V

<u>Footnotes</u>

[1]For some respondents these life course transitions occur in the same year. We never asked specifically which transition preceded which, and consequently there was no way of establishing which she actually did first.

CHAPTER VI

CONCLUSION: LIFE COURSE PATTERNS, SOCIAL CHANGE AND

CHICAGO AREA WOMEN

The Age Stratification Model and Ramifications for Research

on Adult Development

The theoretical framework for this research has been the age

stratification model developed by Riley, Johnson and Foner (1972) and

Riley (1976). Derived from conceptual elements of this model has been

the study of life course changes as a basic measure of social change.

The cohort-historical approach of the age stratification model is most

important for this research in its use of chronological age. Chrono-

logical age is used both as an indicator of an individual's position

in the aging process and also as a way of locating individuals in

birth cohorts. Another important aspect of the age stratification

model is its use of historical time which refers to historical location

and the identification of historical forces. So by placing people

both in specific historical locations and in cohorts, age differentiates

people according to historical experience. The similarity of historical

location for a birth cohort is a result of the fact that they experience

the same events at the same point in the life course. The impact of

any one historical event for any one cohort i contigent on the career

stage of that cohort.

The emphasis of this research has been on cohort timing; in

particular, the measurement of the articulating processes of the age

stratification model: role allocation and socialization. Cohort timing

is most important as it reflects how cohorts are dispersed over roles

as each cohort reaches a specific life stage. From the perspective

of the age stratification model, it can be argued that the cohort

timing of life course transitions reflects how the allocation of roles

in a society have shifted, how periods of socialization for performance

in social roles has expanded or contracted, and how individuals behave,

to some degree, as willful actors. Thus timing and sequencing are the

two most important measures that can relate cohort differences to

historical differences and identify the impact of these changes in the

life course patterns of women.

The value of timing and sequencing of life course transitions,

adopted from the age stratification model, as measures of basic personal

and social change has been borne out in this research. Changes in the

timing of employment, marital and mothering transitions have been

identified with respect to cohort differences as well as differences

in the sequencing of life course transitions. The clear patterns

that have emerged among each cohort and across cohorts indicates

how well differences in life course patterns within cohorts as well

as cohort differences across successive cohorts can be measured from

the operationalization of concepts from the age stratification model.

Clearly, certain aspects of the model are more easily integrated

into empirical analyses of this kind. The presence of age processes

such as cohort flow and aging are inherent assumptions of the model;

this has not created methodological nor conceptual models for this

research. What is less clear is the influence of the general process

in society that affect roles and their relationship to the structural

elements of the model. How to specify the relationship between the age structure of the population and age structure of roles is even less clear and requires far more theoretical specificity than offered by Riley and her associates (1972). Nevertheless, the elaboration of concepts such as cohort replacement and succession through the age strata at the macrolevel and life course patterns at the microlevel have helped frame this research as a study in social change. The focus here has been on the mechanisms that create the connection between aging and social change. However, there is a need to move beyond the descriptive and exploratory analyses prompted by age stratification theory and the relationship between aging and social change; more work is needed on generating testable hypotheses on the relationship between these two processes. With the emergence of more explanatory analyses, the relationship between aging and social change will be better understood, especially when life course change is used as a basic measure of social change.

Cohort Differences and Similarities in Life Course Patterns

The research questions for this study were laid out in detail in Chapter I. Briefly, three major questions were asked: first, with respect to participation in paid work and family roles, what are the various life course patterns followed by a sample of urban American women in their middle years? Have these life course patterns changed over time? And what are the significant differences between birth cohorts? All of these questions were designed to identify the prevalence of these life course transitions; and, in particular, the preva-with which these different transitions are combined over time. Given

certain data limitations, it was not possible to explain with precision why certain life course changes occurred when they did, but the coincidence of events, their frequency, can suggest possible interpretations.

Using synthetic longitudinal data, it was possible to reconstruct the life histories of the sample for four role involvements: education, employment, marriage and mothering. This data set allowed for true cohort comparisons to be made. The behavior for all three cohorts was charted as they moved through their late teens and throughout their twenties. It was possible to examine the cohort born from 1923 to 1932 as they passed through this younger age range, just as   it was possible to look at the two younger cohorts as they passed through that same age range. For each role involvement, role histories were developed that charted the longitudinal experiences of the sample. This allowed for the construction of a typology based on cumulative life experience. In the final construction of the life course patterns typology based on cumulative life experience, education was excluded because of the low proportion of women who returned to school during their middle years. Certainly, middle-aged women are returning to school in record numbers, and the younger women are remaining in school longer before leaving full-time education, but overall most women ha little cumulative experience with education that extends into their middle years.

The typology based on cumulative life experience had nine modal categories that are presented in full in Chapter V. The most common pattern was for women to be currently in the labor force with a history of two or more employment periods, in their first marriage with one or

more children. Due to the effect of age, the youngest cohort had the lowest proportion in the pattern. More of the younger women had experienced only one or two life course transitions as opposed to all three transitions. Again, this is explained partially by the effect of age and the fact that these younger women have lived out less of their lives in comparison to the older cohorts.

In order to compensate for the limitations of the effect of age, the timing and sequencing of each initial (first) role transition was analyzed. This corrected for the effects of age since it specifies how each cohort timed and sequenced their role involvements during a period of time they all have experienced; i.e. their late teens and early twenties. The median age for the first employment period was 20.0, for marriage 22.0, and for motherhood 24.0. It was found that the earlier the timing of first employment period, the greater likelihood of discontinuous employment. Similarly, the earlier the marriage, the greater the likelihood of marital dissolution. With respect to employ- ment, the differences in longitudinal experience are greatest for those who started at the median age and younger and those who started above the median   the oldest cohort; older women with more disrupted and discontinuous employment histories were much more likely to have timed their entry into employment at the median or younger. For the older cohorts, age at marriage is clearly associated with marital dissolution. The tendency among remarried women or not currently married women was to have a younger age at first marriage than the rest of the cohort. It was found that if a woman entered her first marriage later than the median age, she has a greater chance of keeping her first marriage intact.

For sequencing patterns, six modal categories were identified. The most common pattern was employment followed by marriage followed by motherhood. Two other sequencing patterns reflect a variation on this primary pattern: labor force participation, then marriage and motherhood in the same year, and labor force and marriage in the same year, then motherhood. These sequence combinations constituted the experiences of 75 per cent of the sample. The most dramatic differences in behavior were among the women who experienced the marriage followed by motherhood followed by employment sequence. These women were concentrated among the two older cohorts, and had the highest mean average for starting their first employment period.

Multiple role involvements were also studied. It was found that as involvement with only education declines or involvement with only labor force participation declines, two other role combinations experience a steady increase which peaks during the sample's thirties: not employed, married, with children under 17 and employed, married, with children under 17. At all ages, the former combination has a higher proportion than the latter which indicates that women, at least through their thirties, are more likely to be not employed than employed while they have preschool and young school aged children. The proportion of women who are not employed who are married with children peaks at age 34 and then steadily declines throughout their forties. It appears that by their late twenties, the women in the sample are concentrated in two modal combinations that vary only by employment status. During their thirties, the proportion in these two clusters becomes even more dramatic, although women who are not employed, but

wives and mothers, peaks earlier and declines more gradually than it does for women who are employed. By their late forties, women in the sample are dispersed more uniformly across four modal clusters, which includesthe two previously mentioned in addition to not employed, married, with no children and employed, married, with no children. Patterns of discontinuous role involvement seem more apparent as many women remove themselves from one role involvement to become involved with another.

The similarities between the middle and oldest cohorts remained constant throughout their twenties and thirties, although the middle cohort displayed some of its transitional behavior with respect to employment. The oldest cohort was not nearly employed to the degree the middle cohort was as the both respectively lived through their thirties. The ways in which multiple role involvements are related to cumulative life experience have not been explored here. But a goal of further research is to integrate patterns of multiple role involvement with the sequencing of initial life course transitions and cumulative life experience.

In the expanded life course patterns typology, three worklife patterns were found: continuous employment, sequential role involvements and fluctuating role involvements. The effect of age influenced the cohort distribution of these patterns insofar as the youngest cohort is concentrated in patterns of continuous employment and sequential role involvement. The two older cohorts were primarily concentrated in a pattern of double-tracking which is typified by labor force involvement that is subject to and ordered around child-

bearing responsibilities.

The Cohort-Historical Context and Social Change

The evidence presented in Chapters IV and V indicate the significant degree of change in life course patterns. It has been argued throughout this study that life course change is a basic measure of social change. In this respect, three overall findings reflect the impact of social change in the life course patterns of women. First, there is the changing behavior of the youngest cohort. It is clear from their behavior described here that their increased educational attainment and extended involvement in the labor force sets them apart from the middle and oldest cohort. To the degree they are involved with the role of student and paid employee, they have noticeably postponed marriage and delayed motherhood. In some cases, this is not as clear due to the effect of age and their incomplete histories. Certainly, cultural and ideological notions have to be taken into account in order to give a historically grounded interpretation of their behavior. A primary source of influence is economic demands for female labor. This, in combination with attitudes about women as wives and mothers, has been a source of personal change for women in their middle years.

The middle cohort reflects the transitional changes that are occurring in the lives of urban American women. This cohort has experienced a higher divorce rate coupled with a shortened involvement with full-time homemaking during their thirties. The have shifted the way in which they balance their multiple role involvements from their early middle years during their twenties, when they are more simi-

lar to the older cohort, to their mid-thirties. How the youngest
cohort will behave as they move through their thirties has not been
studied here. But the findings suggest that they too will reflect
more varied and transitional behavior with respect to employment,
marriage and mothering.

The responses of the oldest cohort to historical change seem
less dramatic. Most of the oldest cohort is concentrated in one or
two modal patterns of cumulative life experience and worklife patterns.
They have shown less signs of transition as the accomodate employment
into their later middle years. They are most like the middle cohort
during their twenties, but appear to take a more expected and tradition-
al route as they move through their thirties and forties.

The continuing research in this area needs to direct itself to
issues of historical change and its impact on the life course patterns
of women. Economic, ideological and age normative influences differ-
entially affect women contigent on their stage in the life course.
Changes in the timing in one life event, influenced by these historical
factors, can reorient the whole process of family formation and work
careers for women. What needs to be made clearer are the historical
and environmental contexts in which women make decisions and act on
options as they age. Understanding the influence of historical change
on women's lives is the next step in understanding how their related
roles through their middle years.

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APPENDIX A

APPENDIX A

EXPECTED ACCURACY OF PER CENT FOR THE TOTAL SAMPLE
(95% LEVEL OF CONFIDENCE)*

Sample Size (Weighted)	Magnitude of Observed Per Cent "Accuracy Range" ± Per Cent Shown					
	05% 93%	10% 90%	20% 80%	30% 70%	40% 60%	50% 50%
100	8.1	11.1	14.8	17.0	18.2	18.5
250	5.1	7.0	9.4	10.7	11.5	11.7
500	3.6	5.0	6.6	7.6	8.1	8.3
750	3.0	4.1	5.4	6.2	6.6	6.8
1000	2.6	3.5	4.7	5.4	5.7	5.9
1100	2.4	3.4	4.5	5.1	5.5	5.6
1200	2.3	3.2	4.3	4.9	5.2	5.4
1300	2.2	3.1	4.1	4.7	5.0	5.1
1400	2.2	3.0	4.0	4.5	4.9	5.0
1500	2.1	2.9	3.8	4.4	4.7	4.8
1600	2.0	2.8	3.7	4.2	4.5	4.6
1700	2.0	2.7	3.6	4.1	4.4	4.5
1800	1.9	2.6	3.5	4.0	4.3	4.4
1900	1.8	2.6	3.4	3.9	4.2	4.3

*Since the findings in this report are based upon weighted sample data the unweighted sampling errors were correspondingly adjusted for ease of presentation and use. This adjustment was as follows: the ratio of the total weighted data set (1877) to the number of completed interviews (996) was determined. This factor was then multiplied by the unweighted sample sizes. Thus, the sample sizes in this Appendix have been increased by a factor of 1.88.

APPENDIX B

APPENDIX B

CASE DISTRIBUTION FOR COMBINING CUMULATIVE EMPLOYMENT, MARRIAGE AND
MOTHERING HISTORIES FOR BIRTH COHORTS OF CHICAGO AREA WOMEN

	Still in First Marriage		First Marriage Ended		Never Married	
	No Child	Child	No Child	Child	No Child	Child
All Women:						
Never Worked	0	28	2	8	1	5
Still in 1st Work Period	74	91	25	72	97	11
Exited 1st Work Period	·14	322	1	40	2	5
Currently in Labor Force-						
2 or More Work Periods	41	393	6	174·	42	8
Currently Out of Labor Force-						
2 or More Work Periods	10	264	7	120	8	6
25-34 (1943-1952):						
Never Worked	0	12	0	5	1	3
Still in 1st Work Period	62	36	16	30	74	10
Exited 1st Work Period	12	182	1	14	2	3
Currently in Labor Force-						
2 or More Work Periods	39	115	2	53	31	7
Currently Out of Labor Force-						
2 or More Work Periods	8	84	1	38	2	1
35-44 (1933-1942):						
Never Worked	0	8	0	1	0	1
Still in 1st Work Period	10	34	8	30	17	1
Exited 1st Work Period	2	82	0	10	0	2
Currently in Labor Force-						
2 or More Work Periods	2	130	3	57	6	1
Currently Out of Labor Force-						
2 or More Work Periods	0	109	1	51	3	2
45-54 (1923-1932):						
Never Worked	0	8	2	2	0	1
Still in 1st Work Period	2	21	0	12	6	0
Exited 1st Work Period	0	58	0	16	0	0
Currently in Labor Force-						
2 or More Work Periods	0	146	1	64	5	0
Currently Out of Labor Force-						
2 or More Work Periods	2	71	5	31	3	3

APPENDIX C

DISTRIBUTION OF POSSIBLE SEQUENCING OF LIFE COURSE TRANSITIONS FOR BIRTH
COHORT OF CHICAGO AREA WOMEN
(PER CENT)

Sequence	All Women		25-34 (1943-1952)	35-44 (1933-1942)	45-54 (1943-1954)
Labor Force-Marriage-Motherhood	46	(826)	36	51	57
Labor Force-Motherhood-Marriage	2	(38)	2	2	3
Marriage-Labor Force	4	(65)	4	3	3
Marriage-Motherhood-Labor Force	5	(94) ·	3	8	7
Motherhood-Labor Force-Marriage	1	(14)	1	0	0
Motherhood-Marriage-Labor Force	1	(10)	1	0	0
Labor Force-Marriage Only	8	(136)	12	5	2
Marriage-Labor Force Only	2	(44)	4	1	1
Labor Force-Motherhood Only	1	(17)	1	1	1
Marriage-Motherhood Only	2	(30)	2	2	2
Labor Force Only	9	(156)	14	5	4
Labor Force-Marriage Same Year- then Motherhood	13	(231)	14	13	11
Marriage-Motherhood Same Year- then Labor Force	3	(53)	3	3	4
Labor Force then Marriage- Motherhood Same Year	4	(73)	2	5	6
Total N		(1788)	(796)	(546)	(448)

APPROVAL SHEET

The dissertation submitted by Cheryl Allyn Miller has been read and approved by the following committee:

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The final copies have been examined by the director of the dissertation and the signature which appears below verifies the fact that any necessary changes have been incorporated and that the dissertation is now given final approval by the Committee with reference to content and form.

The dissertation is therefore accepted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy.

October 22, 1981
Date

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