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Intergenerational Economic Mobility in the United States —Measures, Differentials, and Trends*

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Abstract

Economic research on intergenerational mobility has tended to focus on the extremes of the distribution of economic well-being—either on the inheritance of wealth or on the persistence of poverty. In the general population, there are few reliable measurements of the persistence of income or earnings across generations, and there are no trend data. In this context typical occupational levels of economic compensation may be a useful proxy for personal

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income or earnings, for many large, national surveys have ascertained the occupations of adult workers and of their parents. For purposes of comparison, I index occupations in two ways, by typical income levels and by typical education levels of workers. I have estimated age-specific intergenerational economic mobility over a 35 year period, using these indicators and data from the 1962 and 1973 Occupational Changes in a Generation Surveys (OCG), the 1986 to 1988 Survey of Income and Program Participation (SIPP), and the 1972 to 2006 NORC General Social Surveys (GSS). Education levels of occupations persist much more strongly across generations than income levels of occupations. For example, among nonblack men, the former regressions or correlations are about 0.37, while the latter are about 0.21. This fact raises interesting questions about the differences between economic and social mobility. While there are differences in intergenerational occupational persistence by race and sex, there is no global trend in the intergenerational persistence of occupational income or education from the 1960s to the 1990s. However, occupational stratification has increased in the Black population, and intergenerational occupational stratification by education has decreased among nonblack men.

Key Words: intergenerational mobility, social mobility, economic mobility, occupational status

In 1997, when I first began to work on this analysis, my intent was mainly to question the naïve approaches and extreme conclusions of the several economists who had recently begun to measure intergenerational (income) mobility. Somewhat to my surprise, in the past decade the measurement of intergenerational economic mobility has become a minor industry, and its visibility—and the visible ignorance of scholars new to the field—has begun drive sociological studies of mobility off the map and to ignore the lessons of sound research and scholarship across the past half-century.¹

I. Economic Research on Social Mobility

A recent review of “Intergenerational Mobility for Women and Minorities in the United States” makes not a single reference to sociological studies of mobility (Kearney, 2006). A 2008 paper on neighborhood intergenerational economic immobility by a young sociologist in a leading American journal makes only passing reference to any sociological research on intergenerational mobility, but draws almost exclusively on economic work (Sharkey, 2008).²

In a 2006 Policy Brief of the Brookings Institution, Isabel Sawhill wrote,

At virtually every level, education in America tends to perpetuate rather than compensate for existing inequalities. The reasons are threefold. First, the K through 12 education system is simply not very strong and thus is not an effective way to break the link between parental background and a child’s eventual success. . . . Second, because K-12 education is financed largely at the state and local level, resources devoted to education are closely linked with where people live and with the property

¹ Another problem altogether is that some recent sociological works focus so narrowly on inequalities that they never refer to the possibility of social mobility (Conley, 2003; Massey, 2007).

² There are also other, more serious methodological problems with the work.

wealth of their neighbors. For this and other reasons, poor children tend to go to poor schools and more advantaged children to good schools. . . . Finally, access both to a quality preschool experience and to higher education continues to depend quite directly on family resources. (2006: 3)

This statement is true, for the inequalities that Sawhill describes are well-documented, but it is true only in part. Sawhill ignores the extent to which educational attainment also frees individuals from the constraints of their social origins. That is, while educational attainment carries effects of social origins, it also carries large effects that are entirely independent of social or economic background—a fact that has been well-documented for the past forty years. To acknowledge that is not to say that existing inequalities should be allowed to persist.

Recently, I was listening to an economist—another of the investigators in the widely publicized Brookings social mobility project (Eckholm, 2008)³—describe an intergenerational income mobility matrix (from the Panel Study of Income Dynamics [PSID]) whose row and column sums were fifths of the income distribution in two generations. She was describing the outflow percentages in each cell at length. I asked whether, given the specification of uniform marginal frequencies, the matrix was symmetric; she had absolutely no clue what I was talking about. From there, she went on to point out that, contrary to “intuition,” the chances of upward mobility were successively greater among persons whose origins were lower. I left.

Before the 1990s, economic research on intergenerational mobility tended to focus on the extremes of the distribution of economic well-being—either on the inheritance of wealth or on the persistence of poverty.⁴ For the general population, there were few

³ Reports of the project are available in PDF at <http://economicmobility.org>

⁴ For example, see Brittain (1977, 1978) or Corcoran and Adams (1997). There is a larger body of work on the measurement of short-term income mobility (Fields,

reliable measurements of the persistence of income or earnings across generations, and there were fewer trend data.

Estimates of magnitude of intergenerational economic persistence have tended to rise in recent years along with improved—or at least fancier—measurement and estimation procedures in new bodies of data, and using new time-series observations. Behrman and Taubman (1985) had estimated the intergenerational correlation of log earnings to be about 0.2. Becker and Tomes (1986) were equally sanguine in their review of a handful of studies in which intergenerational income correlations had been estimated.⁵ Peters analyzed earnings and income data for matched parent-child pairs from the National Longitudinal Surveys, and she found that “Parents’ log income explains only about 9% to 11% of the variation in children’s log incomes” (1992: 456).

However, at the opposite extreme from Becker and Tomes (1986), Stokey (1998: 238) more recently concluded, A . . . clearly there is much less social mobility than we thought just a decade ago. The persistence coefficient for relative status seems to be at least 0.50 and perhaps as high as 0.60 or 0.70.@ In my judgment, this is not credible. Solon (1989, 1992) identified problems of restriction of range in some prior studies and estimated corrections for attenuation of earnings of fathers and of sons in a small sample from the Panel Study of Income Dynamics.⁶ Zimmerman (1992)

Leary, & Ok., 1998; Gottschalk, 1997; Gottschalk & Moffitt, 1994; Hungerford, 1993).

⁵ Goldberger (1989) made an apparently unsuccessful effort to point economists toward sociological research on intergenerational mobility.

⁶ Solon’s criticism of estimated intergenerational earnings correlations in the Wisconsin Longitudinal Study (WLS) (Sewell & Hauser, 1975)—based on the restriction of their sample to high school graduates—has been carried forward in subsequent works in the phrase that the Wisconsin sample is Ahomogeneous,@ e.g., Keister (2000). Her criticism has some merit, but it ignores the high population coverage reported by Sewell and Hauser, and it appears to be directed at broadly representative national studies as well as the WLS. A more salient factor in the size of Sewell and Hauser’s estimates was the youth of the sample. Early in the career the inverse relationship between educational attainment and

introduced similar corrections in his analysis of data from the National Longitudinal Survey, and he also suggested the use of a measure of occupational status—Duncan’s socioeconomic index for occupations (SEI)—as a proxy for economic standing (Duncan, 1961). Like Solon, Zimmerman estimated intergenerational correlations of about 0.4 for corrected earnings measures. Despite the small sample size and large, model-dependent corrections used to obtain it,⁷ one of Solon’s estimates, 0.4, has become widely accepted as a point estimate of intergenerational earnings mobility in the United States (Björklund & Jäntti, 1997; Johnson & Reed, 1996; McMurrer & Sawhill, 1998).

Economists’ estimates of intergenerational economic correlations and regressions have typically been based on more substantial adjustments for variability than sociologists’ estimates of intergenerational correlations of occupational status. Typically, economists have used averages of multiple years of earnings in both generations or have specified factor models of “permanent income” in both generations. Sociologists sometimes fail to make any corrections for response error when such correlations are reported, or at other times they correct for contemporaneous unreliability of reports, but not with the notion that there is a “permanent” level of occupational status around which there are temporary fluctuations. All the same, Beller and Hout’s (2006) balanced review suggests a consensus estimate of about 0.4, which is similar to the correlation of measures of occupational socioeconomic status.

labor force experience suppresses intergenerational economic correlations (Hauser & Daymont, 1977). A more recent example of such low correlations appears in the national data for the U.S. and Germany reported by Couch and Dunn (1997).

⁷ Most of Solon’s (1992: 397) analysis is based on about 350 father-son pairs from the Panel Study of Income Dynamics. It is striking that Solon’s estimate is widely accepted, while Olneck’s (1977) estimates of fraternal resemblance—in a local sample of the same size—are not.

In addition to collecting data from a variety of sources in an effort to generate more plausible point estimates and cross-national comparisons of economic mobility (Aaberge et al., 2002; Björklund & Jäntti, 1997, 2000; Bratsberg et al., 2007; Grawe, 2004; Hertz, 2005; Mazumder, 2005a, 2005b; Solon, 2002), recent economic studies also provide evidence of trend in intergenerational earning or income correlations (Aaronson & Mazumder, 2008; Hertz, 2007; Lee & Solon, 2009).

The similarity of the estimated earnings correlations with intergenerational correlations of the occupational SEI led Zimmerman to suggest that one might regard occupational socioeconomic status as roughly equivalent to permanent income in studies of intergenerational mobility.⁸ Other economic work has estimated intergenerational economic persistence using instrumental variables or has based such estimates on proxy variables.⁹ Some estimates have treated alternative measures of occupational standing as essentially equivalent,¹⁰ but there are substantively important differences in the intergenerational persistence of different occupational measures (Featherman & Hauser, 1976; Featherman, Hauser, & Jones, 1977; Featherman, Jones, & Hauser, 1975; Hauser & Warren, 1997). To my knowledge, no one has attempted to estimate trends in intergenerational mobility using the typical earning levels of worker's occupations as a proxy for individual economic standing.

II. Sibling Resemblance in Economic Standing

Parent-child relationships are not the only source of estimates of family persistence in economic standing. An alternative and,

⁸ Also, see Goldberger (1989).

⁹ See the review by Stokey (1998). Some of the more recent IV estimates were anticipated by Treiman and Hauser (1977).

¹⁰ For example, see Stokey's (1998: 225) comment that Athe Hodge-Siegel-Rossi score of occupational prestige . . . is similar to the Duncan index. @

perhaps, preferable way to measure the intergenerational persistence of economic standing is to focus on the similarity of siblings, typically, to examine correlations between the economic status of brothers and, occasionally, of sisters (Björklund & Jäntti, 2002; Hauser, Sheridan, & Warren, 1999; Mazumder, 2008; Warren, Hauser, & Sheridan, 2002). Such correlations do not directly estimate economic immobility, but they do tell us about the overall association between family of origin and economic success. One major advantage of such measures is that they can be ascertained without asking retrospective questions about the economic status of the family of origin and without following children from youth to adulthood. Only 30 years ago, Griliches (1979) could write that sibling studies were small and unrepresentative,¹¹ but this is no longer the case. The Wisconsin Longitudinal Study provides a large, longitudinal sample of brothers and sisters from a single state (Hauser, 1984, 1988; Hauser & Mossel, 1988; Hauser & Sewell, 1986; Hauser et al., 1999; Warren et al., 2002). National data on sibling resemblance are available from the Panel Study of Income Dynamics (Solon, Corcoran, Gordon, & Laren, 1991), the National Longitudinal Studies of the late 1960s (Altonji & Dunn, 1996a, 1996b), the 1979 National Longitudinal Study of Youth (Korenman & Winship, 2000; Murray, 1997, 1998), and the 1994 NORC General Social Survey (GSS) (Hauser, Warren, Huang, & Carter, 2000). However, each of the national studies except the 1994 GSS was initially restricted to relatively young adults, and as yet none can provide estimates of trend in sibling resemblance in economic outcomes.

¹¹ For example, Brittain's (1977) study of the resemblance of brothers from Cleveland made headline news.

III. Intergenerational Social Mobility and Measures of Occupational Standing

A long tradition of sociological research on intergenerational social mobility is based on persistence in one or another measure of occupational standing. In the United States, most recent trend analyses are based on the Occupational Changes in a Generation Surveys of 1962 (Blau & Duncan, 1967) and 1973 (Featherman & Hauser, 1978) or on the NORC General Social Surveys (GSS), from 1972 to the present (DiPrete & Grusky, 1990; Grusky & DiPrete, 1990; Hout 1988, 1997). Most of this work is based on correlations of Duncan's SEI and subsequent variants of it. The methodological basis of this work is the assumption that adults can provide valid reports of their parents' occupations in social surveys and that a simple average of the economic and educational standing of occupational incumbents suffices to indicate the social standing of occupations. There is ample evidence to support the former assumption.¹² Overall, a typical finding has been that intergenerational occupational status correlations were about 0.33 for white American men in the mid 1970s—but only about 0.23 for Black men—and that correction for attenuation may raise these estimates to about 0.39 for Whites and 0.36 for Blacks (Bielby, Hauser, & Featherman, 1977). Across a variety of measures, there is strong evidence that intergenerational occupational status correlations have declined during this century among Whites, but that such correlations have increased among Blacks as racial discrimination has declined (Hauser et al., 2000). The available evidence also suggests that intergenerational occupational mobility has increased over a longer time-span, since the mid-nineteenth century (Grusky, 1986).

In order to think about occupation as a proxy for economic standing, it is useful to review sociological measures of

¹² Much of this evidence is reviewed by Hauser and Warren (1997).

occupational status. Socioeconomic status is typically used as a shorthand expression for variables that characterize the placement of persons, families, households, census tracts, or other aggregates with respect to the capacity to create or consume goods that are valued in our society. Thus, socioeconomic status may be indicated by educational attainment, by occupational standing, by social class, by income (or poverty), by wealth, by tangible possessions—such as home appliances or libraries, houses, cars, boats, or by degrees from elite colleges and universities. At some times, it has also been taken to include measures of participation in social, cultural, or political life.

Job-holding is the most important social and economic role held by most adults outside their immediate family or household. When we meet someone new, our first question is often, “What do you do?” and that is a very good question. Job-holding defines how we spend much of our time, and it provides strong clues about the activities and circumstances in which that time is spent. Job-holding tells us about the technical and social skills that we bring to the labor market, and for most people job-holding delimits current and future economic prospects. Thus, even for persons who are not attached to the labor market, past jobs or the jobs held by other members of the same family or household provide information about economic and social standing. As market labor has become nearly universal among adult women as well as men, it is increasingly possible to characterize individuals in terms of their own current or past jobs.

There is a long standing and well-developed methodology for measuring one aspect of socioeconomic status using characteristics of job-holders.¹³ The procedure is to link Census occupation lines to a weighted average of occupational educational attainment and occupational income or earnings, thus providing a scalar measure of occupational status. Beginning with Duncan, the weights of

¹³ Hauser and Warren (1997) have comprehensively reviewed the history and methodology of occupational status measurement in the U.S.

occupational education and income have usually been chosen by regressing popular ratings of occupational prestige on these occupational characteristics. The Duncan SEI was constructed by regressing occupational prestige for 45 occupations in a 1947 NORC survey on the characteristics of male workers in 1950 (Duncan, 1961). It was subsequently updated for use with the 1960- and 1970-basis Census occupational classifications (Hauser & Featherman, 1977). Prestige ratings of all occupations were obtained in the 1960s (Siegel, 1971), and Stevens and Featherman (1982, 1981) constructed a new socioeconomic index for men (MSEI2), based upon characteristics of male workers in 1970. This was subsequently updated for use with the 1980 Census classification (Stevens & Cho, 1985). A third national study of occupational prestige was carried out in 1989, and updated versions of the SEI were created using 1980 Census characteristics (Nakao & Treas, 1994) and using 1990 Census characteristics (Hauser & Warren, 1997).

Duncan originally constructed the SEI because prestige scores were available only for a small subset of Census occupational titles. For this reason—or because of confusion about the use of prestige scores in construction of the SEI—the Duncan SEI has sometimes been regarded as equivalent to a prestige measure. It is not. Soon after the Duncan SEI was constructed, researchers learned that occupational socioeconomic status has much greater predictive validity than occupational prestige.¹⁴ For example, intergenerational correlations of the occupational SEI are consistently stronger than those of occupational prestige (Jencks, 1990). Thus, studies of social mobility continued to use the SEI and variants of it, long after prestige scores became available for all occupations and not merely the upwardly biased set used by Duncan.

Occupational status appears to indicate a reliable and valid characteristic of persons or households by dint of its temporal

¹⁴ For example, see Featherman, Jones, and Hauser (1975) and Featherman and Hauser (1976).

stability and its substantial correlation with other social and economic variables. Because past as well as current occupations can be ascertained reliably, even by proxy or retrospectively, status indexes can be used to measure persistence and change in occupational standing across generations and within the career. Occupational status indexes have disadvantages as well as advantages. A scalar measure of occupational standing obviously cannot reflect everything about a job that might be relevant to other social, economic, or psychological variables (Hauser & Logan, 1992; Jencks, Perman, & Rainwater, 1988; Rytina, 1992a, 1992b), nor is there a strong theoretical basis for the concept of occupational socioeconomic status (Hodge, 1981). Moreover, some common occupations do not fit typical relationships among socioeconomic characteristics and occupational prestige (Hauser & Warren, 1997); in particular, farm occupations are often given special treatment. Measures of occupational status do not tell us everything about social standing, and ideally they should be used in combination with other socioeconomic variables, e.g., educational attainment, income, earnings, and wealth.

However, there are serious problems of heterogeneity in the components of occupational socioeconomic status. First, as shown by Hauser and Warren (1997: 225-250), intergenerational persistence in occupational education is much greater than persistence in occupational income. Intergenerational correlations of occupational income are similar to those in occupational prestige—much lower than those of occupational education. In fact, one can plausibly regard occupational education as the central dimension of intergenerational occupational stratification and specify occupational prestige and occupational income each as weak indicators of that construct. Second, because the occupational education of women typically exceeds that of men, while the occupation earnings or income of men typically exceeds that of women, composite indexes of occupational status do not provide an accurate account of gender differences in occupational standing (Boyd, 1986; Warren, Sheridan, & Hauser, 1998). A

socioeconomic index for occupations will show higher standing of women or of men, depending arbitrarily on the weights given to occupational education and occupational income. It is thus desirable to separate the analysis of intergenerational occupational mobility in terms of typical occupational levels of education from mobility in terms of typical occupational levels of income.

IV. National Surveys of Occupational Mobility

Four major surveys provide intergenerational observations of occupational standing that cover the period from the early 1960s to the mid-1990s. Some surveys provide evidence about earlier periods, because they include retrospective questions about career beginnings. The 1962 Occupational Changes in a Generation Survey (OCG) was carried out as a supplement to the March 1962 Current Population Survey (CPS). It covered 20,700 American men between the ages of 20 and 64 (Blau & Duncan, 1967). The 1973 OCG survey repeated and extended the content of the 1962 OCG in a supplement to the March 1973 CPS. It covered 33,600 American men between the ages of 20 and 65. Both OCG surveys are limited to men, and they provide modest samples of Black as well as White men. During 1986 to 1988, some of the content of the two OCG surveys was repeated in the family background module administered in the Survey of Income and Program Participation (SIPP). The SIPP data cover women as well as men between the ages of 25 and 64, approximately 32,000 members of the civilian labor force. The NORC General Social Survey (GSS) is a small, national household survey, which has been administered almost annually to about 1500 adults since 1972. Since 1994, the GSS has been administered every other year to a double sample. From 1972 to 2006, the GSS provides almost 25,000 observations for women and men between the ages of 25 and 64.¹⁵

¹⁵ The Appendix lists numbers of cases for each survey by age, race, and sex. In the

The OCG, SIPP, and GSS data have been classified into Census occupational systems from the 1960s to the 1980s. The 1962 OCG data are classified only into the 1960-basis Census occupational classification. The 1973 OCG data were coded twice, both into the 1960 and 1970 Census classifications. The GSS data were coded using the 1970 Census system from 1972 to 1990 and using the 1980 Census system from 1988 to 2006. There is a three-survey overlap from 1988 to 1990 in which both systems were used. The SIPP data were coded only using the 1980 Census occupational classification. This creates a problem of comparability, both in classification and in the linkage of occupations with their socioeconomic characteristics. Obviously, each occupational classification system is directly linked to characteristics of occupational incumbents only in surveys or censuses using that classification. The 1960 and 1970 classification systems are similar, as are the 1980 and 1990 systems, but there were major changes between 1970 and 1980.

For the present analysis, occupational characteristics—educational attainment and income—were obtained from the Censuses of 1970 and 1990. Each 1970-basis 3-digit occupation line (and selected subsets determined by industry or class of worker) was assigned two characteristics, obtained from a special tabulation of the entire 1970 Census of Population that was commissioned by Charles Nam and Mary Powers.¹⁶ These were the percentage of all occupational incumbents who earned \$10,000 or more in 1969 and the percentage of all occupational incumbents who had completed at least 1 year of college. Each 1990-basis line (or subset) was assigned the percentage of all occupational incumbents who earned \$25,000 or more in 1989 and who had attended at least 1 year of college. At the level of occupational aggregates, there is

analyses reported here, the data have been weighted to estimate population totals, and weights have been adjusted downward in relation to sample design effects in order to yield approximate standard errors.

¹⁶ These data are available on request from the author.

little difference in the behavior of alternative measures, e.g., median earnings, earnings of full-time workers, estimated wage rates, median educational attainment, or percentage of workers with less than a high school education (Hauser & Warren, 1997).

Each occupational variable was expressed as a started logit, $\ln \left(\frac{p_i + .01}{1 - p_i + .01} \right)$, where p_i is the percentage of incumbents in the i th occupation above the indicated threshold. Since the occupation variables are each expressed on a logarithmic scale, one may then interpret intergenerational regression coefficients as elasticities.

Characteristics of occupations in the 1960 Census classification (only at the three-digit level) were estimated by taking weighted averages of component 1970-basis occupation lines in a large sample from the 1960 Census that had been coded using both systems (U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1972). Thus, data from the 1962 OCG survey were analyzed in terms of the characteristics of occupational incumbents in 1970. Data from the 1973 OCG survey have been tabulated twice, once using three-digit 1960-basis codes to which characteristics of occupations in 1970 were attached, and, again, using the full 1970-basis breakdown of occupation, industry, and class of worker, to which characteristics of occupational incumbents in 1970 were attached. The 1980-basis Census occupational classification is so close to that in 1990 that it was possible to assign characteristics of workers in 1990 directly to those lines. The SIPP data were thus linked to occupational characteristics from the 1990 Census. The GSS data were coded using the 1970 occupational classification and characteristics from 1972 to 1990 and using the 1980 occupational classification and 1990 occupational characteristics from 1988 to 2006.

For these reasons, different parts of the data may or may not be strictly comparable. Intercohort comparisons within the 1962 and/or 1973 OCG data are comparable in terms of the 1960 Census classification and characteristics of occupations in 1970. Intercohort comparisons within the GSS data are comparable from 1972 to 1990 in terms of the 1970 Census classification and

occupational characteristics, and they are comparable from 1988 to 2006 in terms of the 1980 Census classification and 1990 occupational characteristics. The 1970-basis data from the 1973 OCG survey provide some internal intercohort comparisons in mobility to first jobs, and they are strictly comparable to the beginning of the 1970-basis GSS series. The SIPP data are similarly comparable to the beginning of the 1980-basis GSS series. Of course, each survey permits direct comparisons of the occupational standing of fathers and sons or daughters in its own terms.

V. Mean Intergenerational and Intercohort Mobility

Table 1 shows means and standard deviations of occupational education for nonblacks in the two OCG surveys and SIPP. Data have been tabulated separately by four age groups, 25 to 34, 35 to 44, 45 to 54, and 55 to 64, in order to permit age-constant intercohort comparisons. My discussion focuses on intergenerational and intercohort shifts in occupational standing, to the neglect of cross-sectional age comparisons, except in the case of first jobs. In the case of occupational origins and first jobs, it is possible to compare age groups within the same survey as if they were cohorts, but such comparisons are not appropriate in the case of current occupation. All of the intergenerational (father-to-son) comparisons of mobility to current occupations in the OCG data indicate upward mobility in occupational education, as do the father-to-daughter comparisons in the 1986-88 SIPP. However, in the 25 to 34 year age group, the SIPP data show essentially no difference between the average occupational education of fathers and sons.

In the case of first occupations, there was essentially no net upward mobility in the 1962 OCG data, while there were substantial upward shifts in the 1973 data. Since the 1973 survey covered essentially the same cohorts 11 years later, this appears inconsistent. However, there was a methodological difference in

Table 1 Means and Standard Deviations of Occupational Education: Nonblack Men, 1963 and 1973 Occupational Changes in a Generation Surveys (OCG), and Nonblack Men and Women, 1986-88 Surveys of Income and Program Participation (SIPP)

Variable	Age 25 to 34		Age 35 to 44		Age 45 to 54		Age 55 to 64	
	Mean	Std. Dev.						
1962 OCG (1960-basis occupations, occupational education in 1970)								
Current job	-1.16	1.46	-1.19	1.35	-1.28	1.27	-1.30	1.25
First job	-1.53	1.30	-1.70	1.12	-1.74	1.09	-1.71	1.10
Father's job	-1.56	1.15	-1.62	1.09	-1.69	1.02	-1.68	1.04
1973 OCG (1960-basis occupations, occupational education in 1970)								
Current job	-1.07	1.47	-1.02	1.44	-1.12	1.36	-1.29	1.30
First job	-1.24	1.48	-1.26	1.48	-1.41	1.36	-1.57	1.26
Father's job	-1.46	1.25	-1.60	1.16	-1.68	1.09	-1.72	1.04
1973 OCG (1970-basis occupations, occupational education in 1970)								
Current job	-1.05	1.69	-0.99	1.66	-1.14	1.53	-1.32	1.45
First job	-1.26	1.68	-1.29	1.69	-1.50	1.54	-1.67	1.43
Father's job	-1.55	1.36	-1.69	1.27	-1.77	1.19	-1.79	1.16
1986-88 SIPP Men (1980-basis occupations, occupational education in 1990)								
Current job	0.15	1.38	0.34	1.43	0.38	1.40	0.33	1.40
Father's job	0.19	1.42	0.06	1.28	-0.26	1.13	-0.36	1.06
1986-88 SIPP Women (1980-basis occupations, occupational education in 1990)								
Current job	0.52	1.29	0.55	1.31	0.37	1.27	0.20	1.19
Father's job	0.26	1.43	-0.01	1.29	-0.24	1.15	-0.26	1.16

the measurement of first jobs in the two surveys. Both surveys aimed to ascertain the first job after the man left school for the last time, but in 1973 the respondent was reminded of the timing and level of school completion just before the question on first job. This probably accounts for the difference in findings. It is probably more appropriate to compare mobility from father's occupation to first jobs across age groups within each survey, and in these comparisons there are essentially no intercohort differences in mean upward or downward mobility.

Table 2 is similar to Table 1, but it shows descriptive statistics for Blacks. In the 1962 OCG survey, there was essentially no upward mobility between fathers' occupations and those of men at any age. However, by 1973 there was pronounced upward intergenerational mobility in occupational education at younger ages. Large upward intergenerational shifts also appear in the SIPP data for men (with one anomalous exception) and in those for women. Similarly, the two OCG surveys show large upward intercohort shifts in the occupational education of current jobs, especially at younger ages. Evidently, the civil rights era lifted the job ceiling for Black Americans to a substantial degree.

Tables 3 and 4 are similar to Tables 1 and 2, but they describe average occupational income levels, rather than educational levels. The findings with respect to intergenerational and intercohort shifts in occupational income are similar to those in occupational education, but with two very important exceptions. First, the data from both OCG surveys show substantial downward mobility to first jobs in intergenerational occupational income. These appear smaller in the 1973 OCG data than in the earlier survey, but the intergenerational shifts are still negative. Thus, men typically enter low wage jobs, but not necessarily low education jobs early in their careers. Second, in the 1986-88 SIPP data, women of all ages experience very large drops in occupational income relative to their fathers. This is perhaps obvious, given the typical earnings differential between women and men, but it is not so trivial to think about the difference when it is expressed intergenerationally.

Table 2 Means and Standard Deviations of Occupational Education: Black Men, 1963 and 1973 Occupational Changes in a Generation Surveys (OCG), and Black Men and Women, 1986-88 Surveys of Income and Program Participation (SIPP)

Variable	Age 25 to 34		Age 35 to 44		Age 45 to 54		Age 55 to 64	
	Mean	Std. Dev.						
1962 OCG (1960-basis occupations, occupational education in 1970)								
Current job	-2.01	0.93	-2.00	0.89	-2.11	0.78	-2.14	0.75
First job	-2.05	0.83	-2.17	0.65	-2.21	0.48	-2.18	0.52
Father's job	-2.02	0.80	-2.09	0.63	-1.95	0.93	-1.99	0.85
1973 OCG (1960-basis occupations, occupational education in 1970)								
Current job	-1.69	1.15	-1.67	1.27	-1.90	1.04	-2.03	0.87
First job	-1.81	1.04	-1.87	1.14	-2.03	0.91	-2.10	0.85
Father's job	-2.11	0.89	-2.10	0.84	-2.18	0.75	-2.17	0.59
1973 OCG (1970-basis occupations, occupational education in 1970)								
Current job	-1.78	1.37	-1.80	1.44	-2.06	1.20	-2.20	0.91
First job	-1.93	1.19	-2.00	1.28	-2.16	1.08	-2.24	0.92
Father's job	-2.24	0.96	-2.24	0.91	-2.27	0.82	-2.25	0.66
1986-88 SIPP Men (1980-basis occupations, occupational education in 1990)								
Current job	-0.33	1.22	-0.20	1.25	-0.31	1.30	-0.52	1.05
Father's job	-0.56	1.08	-0.59	1.02	-0.79	0.71	-0.66	0.87
1986-88 SIPP Women (1980-basis occupations, occupational education in 1990)								
Current job	0.12	1.20	0.17	1.43	-0.27	1.23	-0.16	1.43
Father's job	-0.42	1.19	-0.71	0.96	-0.73	0.81	-0.67	0.68

Table 3 Means and Standard Deviations of Occupational Income: Nonblack Men, 1963 and 1973 Occupational Changes in a Generation Surveys (OCG), and Nonblack Men and Women, 1986-88 Surveys of Income and Program Participation (SIPP)

Variable	Age 25 to 34		Age 35 to 44		Age 45 to 54		Age 55 to 64	
	Mean	Std. Dev.						
1962 OCG (1960-basis occupations, occupational income in 1970)								
Current job	-1.27	1.14	-1.12	1.07	-1.19	1.02	-1.26	1.06
First job	-1.94	1.16	-2.08	1.13	-2.22	1.08	-2.22	1.10
Father's job	-1.40	1.00	-1.38	0.98	-1.43	0.95	-1.37	0.88
1973 OCG (1960-basis occupations, occupational income in 1970)								
Current job	-1.17	1.08	-1.03	1.05	-1.07	1.05	-1.22	1.06
First job	-1.63	1.22	-1.65	1.25	-1.77	1.25	-1.99	1.21
Father's job	-1.36	1.11	-1.46	1.09	-1.51	1.07	-1.51	1.03
1973 OCG (1970-basis occupations, occupational income in 1970)								
Current job	-0.97	1.20	-0.77	1.18	-0.86	1.22	-1.08	1.24
First job	-1.55	1.32	-1.58	1.37	-1.73	1.36	-1.99	1.32
Father's job	-1.25	1.22	-1.39	1.19	-1.46	1.17	-1.47	1.13
1986-88 SIPP Men (1980-basis occupations, occupational income in 1990)								
Current job	-0.83	0.93	-0.68	0.88	-0.64	0.89	-0.71	0.91
Father's job	-0.70	0.91	-0.85	0.86	-0.97	0.83	-1.04	0.79
1986-88 SIPP Women (1980-basis occupations, occupational income in 1990)								
Current job	-1.37	1.07	-1.34	1.04	-1.42	1.01	-1.60	0.95
Father's job	-0.65	0.91	-0.81	0.87	-0.96	0.84	-0.99	0.83

Table 4 Means and Standard Deviations of Occupational Income: Black Men, 1963 and 1973 Occupational Changes in Generation Surveys (OCG), and Black Men and Women, 1986-88 Surveys of Income and Program Participation (SIPP)

Variable	Age 25 to 34		Age 35 to 44		Age 45 to 54		Age 55 to 64	
	Mean	Std. Dev.	Mean	Std. Dev.	Mean	Std. Dev.	Mean	Std. Dev.
	1962 OCG (1960-basis occupations, occupational income in 1970)							
Current job	-2.39	0.90	-2.22	0.91	-2.27	0.86	-2.50	0.90
First job	-2.58	0.86	-2.58	0.92	-2.84	0.88	-2.84	0.87
Father's job	-1.94	0.99	-2.03	0.89	-1.78	0.80	-1.75	0.84
	1973 OCG (1960-basis occupations, occupational income in 1970)							
Current job	-1.83	1.02	-1.83	1.00	-1.99	0.94	-2.19	0.93
First job	-2.33	1.04	-2.39	1.04	-2.46	0.96	-2.64	0.99
Father's job	-2.31	1.13	-2.28	1.13	-2.30	1.18	-2.16	1.07
	1973 OCG (1970-basis occupations, occupational income in 1970)							
Current job	-1.70	1.15	-1.71	1.06	-1.88	1.05	-2.15	0.95
First job	-2.31	1.18	-2.34	1.16	-2.42	1.07	-2.55	1.08
Father's job	-2.24	1.22	-2.30	1.21	-2.27	1.20	-2.10	1.12
	1986-88 SIPP Men (1980-basis occupations, occupational income in 1990)							
Current job	-1.26	0.91	-1.10	0.87	-1.13	0.79	-1.24	0.87
Father's job	-1.17	0.80	-1.23	0.74	-1.43	0.54	-1.49	0.71
	1986-88 SIPP Women (1980-basis occupations, occupational income in 1990)							
Current job	-1.63	0.99	-1.53	1.06	-1.78	0.89	-1.79	1.00
Father's job	-1.16	0.77	-1.31	0.75	-1.41	0.59	-1.37	0.63

Tables 5 and 6 show mean levels of occupational education for nonblack men and women in the GSS from 1972 to 2006.¹⁷ Note that the 1980-basis GSS statistics for 1988 to 1991 are similar to those in Table 1 for SIPP from 1986 to 1988.¹⁸ nonblack men and women show somewhat different trends in intergenerational mobility in occupational education. Most intergenerational shifts are positive, both for men and women. Among men, however, there is evidence of declining upward shifts in recent years at younger ages. Net father-to-son mobility is negative after 1980. Above age 45, however, net upward intergenerational mobility in occupational education is essentially constant. Among women, there is a stronger interaction effect between intergenerational shifts, age, and period. Intergenerational mobility in occupational education is positive in all of the 1970-basis or 1980-basis comparisons, but it is smaller at younger ages and larger at older ages in more recent years. Intercohort shifts in occupational education are relatively small, both for men and women, except women have experienced substantial upward intercohort shifts in occupational standing since the late 1980s in the two older age groups.

Tables 7 and 8 show descriptive statistics for occupational income in the GSS data. Among men, these shifts are almost always positive, and among women, the intergenerational shifts are almost always negative. In general, the shifts are more positive for men and less negative for women at older ages. That is, occupational changes during careers tend to improve occupational earnings relative to one's parents. One significant exception to these patterns is that the youngest men have experienced downward occupational earnings mobility relative to their fathers throughout

¹⁷ The GSS data do not provide enough cases of Black men and women for an analysis at this level of disaggregation.

¹⁸ The GSS and SIPP means and standard deviations are also consistent in occupational income. Compare the 1980-basis GSS data for 1988 to 1991 in Tables 7 and 8 with the 1980-basis SIPP data in Table 3.

the period covered by the GSS data. The generational gap may have grown in recent years, and there is a corresponding decline in net intergenerational occupational earnings mobility among men at ages 35 to 44. Although intergenerational mobility in occupational earnings is consistently negative among women, it appears to have grown smaller at every age between the early 1970s and the late 1980s. However, the 1980-basis comparison between the late 1980s and the early 1990s suggests a possible turnaround among younger women. That is, the decline in the intergenerational occupational earnings gap may not have continued for young women after 1990. Among men, intercohort changes in current occupational earnings levels have been small, but among women, growth in typical levels of occupational earnings was substantial at all ages until the end of the 1980s.

VI. Intergenerational Regressions of Occupational Standing

In the remainder of this paper, I compare estimates of intergenerational occupational regressions and correlations in the OCG, SIPP, and GSS data. Table 9 shows estimated intergenerational regressions of occupational education by age and survey in the OCG and SIPP data. These estimates will look familiar to anyone who has looked at corresponding estimates based on the Duncan SEI or variants of it (Hauser et al. 2000), for the behavior of occupational education is very similar to that of the SEI. Among nonblack men, age-specific intergenerational regressions and correlations range from about 0.30 to 0.45, without correction for measurement error. Such corrections might raise the correlations by at most 20 percent. In the 1960-basis coding, there is a modest decline between 1962 and 1973 in the regressions and correlations in the three youngest age groups for nonblack men. In the 1973 OCG data, age-specific regressions and correlations are appreciably higher when the estimates are based

Table 5 Means and Standard Deviations of Occupational Education:
Nonblack Men in the NORC General Social Survey, 1972 to 2006

Variable	Age 25 to 34		Age 35 to 44		Age 45 to 54		Age 55 to 64	
	Mean	Std Dev						
1972 to 1975 (1970-basis occupations and occupational education)								
Current job	-0.96	1.62	-0.94	1.71	-1.18	1.50	-1.29	1.51
Father's job	-1.41	1.44	-1.69	1.27	-1.79	1.20	-1.80	1.18
1976 to 1980 (1970-basis occupations and occupational education)								
Current job	-1.10	1.66	-0.92	1.73	-1.17	1.55	-1.14	1.53
Father's job	-1.39	1.51	-1.64	1.40	-1.84	1.20	-1.68	1.30
1982 to 1985 (1970-basis occupations and occupational education)								
Current job	-1.32	1.51	-0.88	1.75	-0.93	1.67	-1.20	1.58
Father's job	-1.21	1.53	-1.39	1.45	-1.75	1.26	-1.79	1.16
1986 to 1990 (1970-basis occupations and occupational education)								
Current job	-1.18	1.51	-0.79	1.70	-0.87	1.75	-0.94	1.60
Father's job	-1.15	1.52	-1.30	1.50	-1.54	1.42	-1.63	1.32
1988 to 1991 (1980-basis occupations and occupational education in 1990)								
Current job	0.03	1.25	0.25	1.32	0.28	1.33	0.31	1.30
Father's job	0.09	1.21	-0.12	1.19	-0.33	1.02	-0.42	1.05
1993 to 1996 (1980-basis occupations and occupational education in 1990)								
Current job	0.03	1.23	0.26	1.34	0.35	1.30	0.27	1.34
Father's job	0.17	1.25	0.15	1.31	-0.04	1.22	-0.25	1.03
1998 to 2000 (1980-basis occupations and occupational education in 1990)								
Current job	0.31	1.41	0.48	1.49	0.43	1.44	0.52	1.57
Father's job	0.42	1.55	0.25	1.48	-0.05	1.25	-0.17	1.26
2002 to 2004 (1980-basis occupations and occupational education in 1990)								
Current job	0.49	1.53	0.40	1.40	0.48	1.43	0.49	1.49
Father's job	0.38	1.56	0.22	1.43	0.26	1.41	-0.11	1.31
2006 (1980-basis occupations and occupational education in 1990)								
Current job	0.21	1.40	0.42	1.48	0.25	1.44	0.54	1.59
Father's job	-0.02	1.39	0.48	1.66	0.20	1.42	-0.20	1.15

Table 6 Means and Standard Deviations of Occupational Education:
Nonblack Women in the NORC General Social Survey, 1972 to 2006

Variable	Age 25 to 34		Age 35 to 44		Age 45 to 54		Age 55 to 64	
	Mean	Std Dev						
1972 to 1975 (1970-basis occupations and occupational education)								
Current job	-0.79	1.49	-1.09	1.40	-1.29	1.39	-1.40	1.38
Father's job	-1.46	1.41	-1.67	1.22	-1.65	1.24	-1.81	1.12
1976 to 1980 (1970-basis occupations and occupational education)								
Current job	-0.95	1.45	-0.98	1.53	-1.15	1.39	-1.29	1.42
Father's job	-1.48	1.33	-1.71	1.28	-1.76	1.25	-1.79	1.17
1982 to 1985 (1970-basis occupations and occupational education)								
Current job	-0.88	1.30	-0.67	1.44	-0.93	1.40	-1.14	1.33
Father's job	-1.26	1.53	-1.43	1.48	-1.70	1.23	-1.82	1.23
1986 to 1990 (1970-basis occupations and occupational education)								
Current job	-0.73	1.40	-0.59	1.49	-0.89	1.48	-1.08	1.39
Father's job	-1.04	1.64	-1.24	1.49	-1.57	1.32	-1.77	1.19
1988 to 1991 (1980-basis occupations and occupational education in 1990)								
Current job	0.38	1.18	0.46	1.20	0.18	1.22	0.01	1.22
Father's job	0.15	1.26	-0.01	1.21	-0.30	1.07	-0.39	1.05
1993 to 1996 (1980-basis occupations and occupational education in 1990)								
Current job	0.34	1.13	0.43	1.21	0.62	1.23	0.36	1.19
Father's job	0.17	1.26	0.05	1.29	-0.07	1.18	-0.28	1.10
1998 to 2000 (1980-basis occupations and occupational education in 1990)								
Current job	0.70	1.30	0.65	1.31	0.77	1.36	0.50	1.44
Father's job	0.23	1.42	0.29	1.44	-0.02	1.31	-0.12	1.30
2002 to 2004 (1980-basis occupations and occupational education in 1990)								
Current job	0.80	1.40	0.71	1.30	0.88	1.41	0.75	1.37
Father's job	0.19	1.45	0.19	1.47	0.19	1.41	0.01	1.35
2006 (1980-basis occupations and occupational education in 1990)								
Current job	0.74	1.50	0.74	1.39	0.87	1.49	0.80	1.48
Father's job	0.36	1.74	0.16	1.37	0.20	1.40	-0.06	1.17

Table 7 Means and Standard Deviations of Occupational Income:
Nonblack Men in the NORC General Social Survey, 1972 to 2006

Variable	Age 25 to 34		Age 35 to 44		Age 45 to 54		Age 55 to 64	
	Mean	Std Dev						
1972 to 1975 (1970-basis occupations and occupational income)								
Current job	-1.06	1.17	-0.78	1.25	-0.87	1.25	-1.02	1.09
Father's job	-0.98	1.16	-1.04	1.15	-1.16	1.11	-1.29	1.07
1976 to 1980 (1970-basis occupations and occupational income)								
Current job	-1.11	1.18	-0.72	1.23	-0.92	1.23	-0.94	1.14
Father's job	-1.04	1.18	-1.09	1.15	-1.26	1.06	-1.19	1.04
1982 to 1985 (1970-basis occupations and occupational income)								
Current job	-1.17	1.18	-0.79	1.20	-0.65	1.23	-0.89	1.29
Father's job	-0.82	1.16	-0.97	1.14	-1.20	1.12	-1.17	1.07
1986 to 1990 (1970-basis occupations and occupational income)								
Current job	-1.02	1.30	-0.74	1.25	-0.80	1.28	-0.87	1.26
Father's job	-0.86	1.19	-0.87	1.21	-1.04	1.16	-1.11	1.05
1988 to 1991 (1980-basis occupations and occupational income in 1990)								
Current job	-0.90	0.93	-0.76	0.88	-0.69	0.88	-0.70	0.84
Father's job	-0.74	0.91	-0.79	0.88	-0.97	0.79	-1.07	0.80
1993 to 1996 (1980-basis occupations and occupational income in 1990)								
Current job	-0.95	0.90	-0.73	0.91	-0.57	0.87	-0.70	0.94
Father's job	-0.63	0.90	-0.65	0.89	-0.79	0.90	-0.92	0.81
1998 to 2000 (1980-basis occupations and occupational income in 1990)								
Current job	-0.84	0.94	-0.59	0.91	-0.71	0.93	-0.58	0.97
Father's job	-0.57	0.94	-0.66	0.91	-0.82	0.85	-0.85	0.85
2002-2004 (1980-basis occupations and occupational income in 1990)								
Current job	-0.77	0.98	-0.66	0.90	-0.58	0.83	-0.58	0.92
Father's job	-0.65	0.92	-0.62	0.89	-0.61	0.90	-0.84	0.90
2006 (1980-basis occupations and occupational income in 1990)								
Current job	-0.97	0.97	-0.62	0.96	-0.64	0.83	-0.58	0.90
Father's job	-0.76	1.02	-0.52	1.02	-0.70	0.90	-0.83	0.88

Table 8 Means and Standard Deviations of Occupational Income:
Nonblack Women in the NORC General Social Survey, 1972 to 2006

Variable	Age 25 to 34		Age 35 to 44		Age 45 to 54		Age 55 to 64	
	Mean	Std Dev						
1972 to 1975 (1970-basis occupations and occupational income)								
Current job	-2.44	1.20	-2.68	1.14	-2.51	1.24	-2.68	1.20
Father's job	-1.02	1.17	-1.15	1.14	-1.20	1.13	-1.26	0.96
1976 to 1980 (1970-basis occupations and occupational income)								
Current job	-2.48	1.20	-2.39	1.26	-2.41	1.28	-2.44	1.21
Father's job	-1.00	1.18	-1.23	1.10	-1.18	1.02	-1.29	1.06
1982 to 1985 (1970-basis occupations and occupational income)								
Current job	-2.26	1.31	-2.10	1.37	-2.29	1.36	-2.35	1.34
Father's job	-0.94	1.22	-1.00	1.25	-1.12	1.08	-1.27	1.04
1986 to 1990 (1970-basis occupations and occupational income)								
Current job	-2.00	1.48	-1.96	1.43	-2.13	1.42	-2.30	1.36
Father's job	-0.78	1.17	-0.84	1.18	-1.13	1.21	-1.25	1.14
1988 to 1991 (1980-basis occupations and occupational income in 1990)								
Current job	-1.42	1.05	-1.34	1.03	-1.46	1.00	-1.63	1.00
Father's job	-0.73	0.89	-0.76	0.86	-0.93	0.87	-1.04	0.88
1993 to 1996 (1980-basis occupations and occupational income in 1990)								
Current job	-1.46	1.03	-1.35	1.06	-1.26	1.03	-1.50	1.00
Father's job	-0.65	0.86	-0.75	0.90	-0.85	0.88	-0.95	0.83
1998 to 2000 (1980-basis occupations and occupational income in 1990)								
Current job	-1.24	1.11	-1.16	1.05	-1.11	1.08	-1.33	1.05
Father's job	-0.60	0.86	-0.67	0.92	-0.78	0.88	-0.90	0.95
2002-2004 (1980-basis occupations and occupational income in 1990)								
Current job	-1.20	1.09	-1.19	1.11	-1.09	1.09	-1.18	1.05
Father's job	-0.67	0.89	-0.64	0.95	-0.61	0.92	-0.79	0.86
2006 (1980-basis occupations and occupational income in 1990)								
Current job	-1.23	1.10	-1.19	1.13	-1.08	1.15	-1.21	1.13
Father's job	-0.69	1.05	-0.78	0.89	-0.67	0.90	-0.81	0.84

Table 9 Intergenerational Regressions of Occupational Education: 1962 and 1973 Occupational Changes in a Generation Surveys (OCG) and 1986-88 Surveys of Income and Program Participation (SIPP)

Group and variables	Age 25 to 34		Age 35 to 44		Age 45 to 54		Age 55 to 64	
	b	r	b	r	b	r	b	r
Nonblack men								
Father's occupation and current occupation								
1962 OCG (1960-basis occupations, occ. ed. in 1970)	0.445 (0.025)	0.346	0.434 (0.023)	0.345	0.421 (0.025)	0.336	0.376 (0.029)	0.310
1973 OCG (1960-basis occupations, occ. ed. in 1970)	0.386 (0.016)	0.325	0.413 (0.019)	0.326	0.393 (0.019)	0.310	0.401 (0.023)	0.319
1973 OCG (1970-basis occupations, occ. ed. in 1970)	0.428 (0.017)	0.342	0.458 (0.019)	0.350	0.444 (0.019)	0.344	0.429 (0.022)	0.341
1986-88 SIPP (1980-basis occupations, occ. ed. in 1990)	0.343 (0.016)	0.348	0.355 (0.021)	0.313	0.438 (0.027)	0.349	0.435 (0.035)	0.322
Father's occupation and first occupation								
1962 OCG (1960-basis occupations, occ. ed. in 1970)	0.390 (0.025)	0.336	0.354 (0.020)	0.334	0.368 (0.021)	0.339	0.376 (0.025)	0.355
1973 OCG (1960-basis occupations, occ. ed. in 1970)	0.425 (0.017)	0.354	0.469 (0.020)	0.365	0.430 (0.019)	0.341	0.419 (0.023)	0.348
1973 OCG (1970-basis occupations, occ. ed. in 1970)	0.449 (0.017)	0.359	0.494 (0.020)	0.371	0.463 (0.019)	0.357	0.440 (0.022)	0.356
Black men								
Father's occupation and current occupation								
1962 OCG (1960-basis occupations, occ. ed. in 1970)	0.063 (0.083)	0.052	0.295 (0.102)	0.195	-0.087 (0.063)	-0.106	0.236 (0.088)	0.248
1973 OCG (1960-basis occupations, occ. ed. in 1970)	0.376 (0.046)	0.287	0.255 (0.061)	0.168	0.284 (0.059)	0.200	0.143 (0.082)	0.095
1973 OCG (1970-basis occupations, occ. ed. in 1970)	0.341 (0.052)	0.235	0.263 (0.063)	0.167	0.228 (0.062)	0.154	0.117 (0.077)	0.082
1986-88 SIPP (1980-basis occupations, occ. ed. in 1990)	0.473 (0.065)	0.422	0.220 (0.087)	0.172	0.103 (0.168)	0.054	-0.143 (0.129)	-0.123
Father's occupation and first occupation								
1962 OCG (1960-basis occupations, occ. ed. in 1970)	0.138 (0.073)	0.133	-0.055 (0.074)	-0.052	0.048 (0.040)	0.093	0.085 (0.057)	0.142
1973 OCG (1960-basis occupations, occ. ed. in 1970)	0.421 (0.044)	0.355	0.221 (0.060)	0.158	0.233 (0.054)	0.188	0.384 (0.078)	0.271
1973 OCG (1970-basis occupations, occ. ed. in 1970)	0.353 (0.048)	0.272	0.223 (0.060)	0.156	0.236 (0.057)	0.179	0.252 (0.077)	0.179
Nonblack women: Father's occupation and current occupation								
1986-88 SIPP (1980-basis occupations, occ. ed. in 1990)	0.267 (0.016)	0.297	0.249 (0.020)	0.243	0.295 (0.028)	0.267	0.280 (0.031)	0.275
Black women: Father's occupation and current occupation								
1986-88 SIPP (1980-basis occupations, occ. ed. in 1990)	0.232 (0.064)	0.219	0.336 (0.095)	0.219	0.105 (0.130)	0.065	0.147 (0.219)	0.074

on the 1970-basis coding than when they are based on the 1960-basis coding. This leads me to suggest that one should exercise as much caution in comparing regressions among alternative data sources and coding and scaling conventions as in comparing means or standard deviations.

The absence of trend among nonblack men in the period covered by the two OCG surveys is yet more evident in the cross-sectional comparisons across age groups of regressions and correlations of status of first job and father's occupation. There is no systematic trend across the four cohorts covered in either survey. For example, in the 1962 data, the four regressions are 0.376, 0.368, 0.354, and 0.390. However, these observations do suggest a possible decline in age-specific correlations between 1962 and 1973. Note that men aged 25 to 34 in 1962 are essentially the same as those aged 35 to 44 in 1973, and so on. In each of the three possible comparisons, the regressions are somewhat larger in the 1973 data (coded to 1960 specifications) than in the 1962 data. This suggests there is something about the 1973 survey that raises the correlations—or else that recollections of first jobs and parental occupations tend to become more similar with increasing age. If the latter possibility does not hold, then the age-specific comparisons in regressions of current occupational education on father's occupational education may understate the decline in occupational persistence.

Among Black men, the estimates are much less reliable, but some large differentials and changes stand out. Intergenerational regressions and correlations of occupational education are lower for Blacks than nonblacks, especially in the 1960s. In many comparisons, the regressions and correlations have become larger in more recent periods, especially at younger ages. That is, since the 1960s, decreased racial discrimination has increased intergenerational occupational stratification. Blacks, like Whites, can now successfully transmit privilege or deprivation from one generation to the next.

Table 9 also shows estimates of intergenerational regressions in occupational education for black and nonblack women from SIPP, and it is instructive to compare these estimates with the corresponding estimates for men. Among nonblack women, as among nonblack men, the regressions are essentially the same at all four ages, but they are much smaller for women than men. That is, nonblack women's occupational attainments, as indexed by occupational levels of education, are less constrained by social background than those of men.¹⁹ In the SIPP data, among Black women and men, there is an inverse relationship between age and the intergenerational regressions. That is, the regressions are low among older workers. This is consistent with recent growth in occupational stratification in the Black population. While the regression estimates differ substantially between Black women and men in the two youngest age groups, the data are not reliable enough to warrant any strong conclusion about gender differences in stratification by occupational education within the Black population.

The entries in Table 10 correspond exactly to those in Table 9, except the estimates pertain to typical occupational levels of income, rather than occupational levels of education. The strikingly obvious fact about the comparison is that intergenerational persistence of occupational income levels is much lower than that of occupational education. For example, among nonblack men, the intergenerational regressions and correlations of occupational education are about 0.37, while those of occupational income are about 0.21. The persistence of occupational income is about 55 to 65 percent as large as that of occupational education. The relative size of the income effects is somewhat larger for first jobs than for current jobs, and it is larger among nonblack women (in the 1986-88 SIPP data) than among nonblack men.

¹⁹ However, one might possibly compare that lack of constraint to the Aequal opportunity@ (to fail) enjoyed by Black men in the period of American apartheid.

Table 10 Intergenerational Regressions of Occupational Income: 1962 and 1973 Occupational Changes in a Generation Surveys (OCG) and 1986-88 Surveys of Income and Program Participation (SIPP)

Group and variables	Age 25 to 34		Age 35 to 44		Age 45 to 54		Age 55 to 64	
	b	r	b	r	b	r	b	r
Nonblack men								
Father's occupation and current occupation								
1962 OCG (1960-basis occupations, occ. inc. in 1970)	0.265 (0.023)	0.232	0.225 (0.021)	0.205	0.220 (0.022)	0.205	0.238 (0.030)	0.196
1973 OCG (1960-basis occupations, occ. inc. in 1970)	0.188 (0.014)	0.194	0.208 (0.015)	0.214	0.196 (0.015)	0.200	0.194 (0.019)	0.188
1973 OCG (1970-basis occupations, occ. inc. in 1970)	0.186 (0.014)	0.190	0.215 (0.015)	0.216	0.229 (0.016)	0.219	0.218 (0.020)	0.200
1986-88 SIPP (1980-basis occupations, occ. inc. in 1990)	0.227 (0.017)	0.222	0.213 (0.019)	0.208	0.239 (0.024)	0.223	0.203 (0.032)	0.174
Father's occupation and first occupation								
1962 OCG (1960-basis occupations, occ. inc. in 1970)	0.287 (0.024)	0.246	0.222 (0.023)	0.189	0.263 (0.024)	0.228	0.284 (0.031)	0.225
1973 OCG (1960-basis occupations, occ. inc. in 1970)	0.279 (0.016)	0.255	0.272 (0.019)	0.235	0.258 (0.019)	0.220	0.239 (0.023)	0.205
1973 OCG (1970-basis occupations, occ. inc. in 1970)	0.266 (0.015)	0.247	0.279 (0.018)	0.242	0.291 (0.018)	0.248	0.245 (0.022)	0.210
Black men								
Father's occupation and current occupation								
1962 OCG (1960-basis occupations, occ. inc. in 1970)	-0.001 (0.064)	-0.001	-0.028 (0.070)	-0.027	0.001 (0.082)	0.001	-0.116 (0.107)	-0.103
1973 OCG (1960-basis occupations, occ. inc. in 1970)	0.054 (0.034)	0.059	0.081 (0.036)	0.093	0.019 (0.034)	0.023	-0.033 (0.047)	-0.039
1973 OCG (1970-basis occupations, occ. inc. in 1970)	0.053 (0.035)	0.035	0.082 (0.035)	0.094	0.037 (0.037)	0.042	-0.019 (0.047)	-0.023
1986-88 SIPP (1980-basis occupations, occ. inc. in 1990)	0.271 (0.069)	0.246	0.094 (0.083)	0.078	0.084 (0.124)	0.059	-0.226 (0.129)	-0.193
Father's occupation and first occupation								
1962 OCG (1960-basis occupations, occ. inc. in 1970)	-0.021 (0.059)	-0.026	-0.044 (0.074)	-0.042	0.008 (0.084)	0.007	0.101 (0.104)	0.093
1973 OCG (1960-basis occupations, occ. inc. in 1970)	0.201 (0.036)	0.214	0.103 (0.040)	0.112	0.005 (0.037)	0.059	0.111 (0.052)	0.120
1973 OCG (1970-basis occupations, occ. inc. in 1970)	0.216 (0.037)	0.221	0.103 (0.040)	0.108	0.076 (0.039)	0.083	0.101 (0.054)	0.104
Nonblack women: Father's occupation and current occupation								
1986-88 SIPP (1980-basis occupations, occ. inc. in 1990)	0.227 (0.022)	0.194	0.205 (0.024)	0.171	0.166 (0.031)	0.137	0.187 (0.036)	0.162
Black women: Father's occupation and current occupation								
1986-88 SIPP (1980-basis occupations, occ. inc. in 1990)	0.305 (0.080)	0.231	0.326 (0.090)	0.225	0.359 (0.124)	0.230	0.341 (0.164)	0.223

I can think of no methodological reason why occupational income should be less valid as an indicator of the economic standing of occupations than occupational education should be as an indicator of their social standing or their knowledge requirements. It seems quite clear that the similarity in estimates of occupational persistence based on heroically corrected wage regressions and uncorrected regressions of the socioeconomic status of occupations has little to do with the value of occupational socioeconomic indexes as an indicator of the economic standing of occupations. It would appear that the major axis of intergenerational occupational stratification has far less to do with the typical economic levels of occupations than with their typical educational levels. In fact, Hauser and Warren (1997) were able to write a model of intergenerational occupational stratification in the 1994 GSS data in which correlations among occupational income variables in the generation of fathers and sons were incidental to a structural model in occupational education.

This finding raises interesting questions. Why should occupational education, rather than occupational income, be the major basis for intergenerational occupational stratification? Years ago, when they first encountered the Duncan SEI, some economists suggested that it was a poor substitute for occupational income. Surely, that composite and its cousins are grievously flawed, but not because they fail to reflect an important dimension of intergenerational stratification. More important, why is the economic stratification of occupations so weak, and why is it, apparently, distinct in magnitude from economic stratification as expressed directly in (corrected) wages or earnings?

As in the case of the stratification of occupational education, the estimates for Black men in Table 10 are somewhat unstable, yet the regressions of occupational income appear to show the same tendency toward secular growth that appears in Table 9. If anything, the estimates of regression by occupational income among Black men are even lower than among nonblack men relative to the estimates by occupational education. However, the

1986-88 SIPP data provide one striking exception to the general finding. Among Black women at every age, the correlations and regressions of occupational income are as large as or larger than those of occupational education. Why should the economic standing of occupations be so much more important among Black women than in other population groups?

Tables 11 and 12 give the intergenerational regressions of occupational education and of occupational income among nonblack women and men in the GSS from 1972 to 2006. Here, as in Tables 9 and 10, the larger effects of occupational education are evident, but the GSS data also show interesting trends. Among men, there may be a downward drift in the economic stratification of occupations relative to their educational stratification. The economic regressions and correlations were about 0.7 as large as the educational regressions in 1972 to 1975, but they ranged between 0.5 and 0.6 thereafter. The pattern is quite different among women. In each comparison of periods within the 1970-basis series, and in the comparison between the two 1980-basis series, the economic regressions become larger relative to the education regressions. For example, in 1972 to 1975, the economic regressions and correlations were only about 0.34 as large as the educational regressions, but in 1986 to 1998, the economic regressions and correlations were almost 0.7 times as large as the educational regressions. However, this has not occurred because occupational stratification by earnings has become more important among women, but because occupational stratification by education has declined. For example, at age 25 to 34, the regression coefficient was 0.459 among women in 1972 to 1975, while it was only 0.209 in 1986 to 1990.²⁰ Again, the findings raise interesting questions. Why should economic

²⁰ The latter estimate is not significantly different from that of 0.267 among nonblack women in SIPP during 1986 to 1988 (see Table 9), while the GSS regression estimate of 0.205 is not significantly different from that of 0.227 among nonblack women in SIPP (see Table 10).

Table 11 Intergenerational Regressions of Occupational Education:
Nonblack Men and Women in the NORC General Social Survey, 1972 to 2006

Group and variables	Age 25 to 34		Age 35 to 44		Age 45 to 54		Age 55 to 64	
	b	r	b	r	b	r	b	r
Men								
1972 to 1975 (1970-basis occupations and occ. ed.)	0.298 (0.064)	0.262	0.342 (0.082)	0.255	0.330 (0.071)	0.261	0.503 (0.074)	0.392
1976 to 1980 (1970-basis occupations and occ. ed.)	0.327 (0.059)	0.295	0.510 (0.071)	0.417	0.498 (0.079)	0.381	0.457 (0.074)	0.390
1982 to 1985 (1970-basis occupations and occ. ed.)	0.308 (0.053)	0.312	0.412 (0.073)	0.341	0.444 (0.087)	0.338	0.652 (0.082)	0.482
1986 to 1990 (1970-basis occupations and occ. ed.)	0.365 (0.049)	0.360	0.351 (0.056)	0.307	0.375 (0.074)	0.301	0.486 (0.086)	0.394
1988 to 1991 (1980-basis occupations and 1990 occ. ed.)	0.277 (0.062)	0.268	0.296 (0.062)	0.262	0.322 (0.096)	0.240	0.455 (0.102)	0.365
1993 to 1996 (1980-basis occupations and 1990 occ. ed.)	0.346 (0.050)	0.355	0.458 (0.050)	0.438	0.352 (0.059)	0.322	0.456 (0.093)	0.354
1998 to 2000 (1980-basis occupations and 1990 occ. ed.)	0.294 (0.046)	0.321	0.376 (0.045)	0.374	0.442 (0.058)	0.386	0.535 (0.078)	0.430
2002-2004(1980-basis occupations and 1990 occ. ed.)	0.308 (0.052)	0.316	0.382 (0.048)	0.391	0.350 (0.052)	0.345	0.216 (0.068)	0.189
2006 (1980-basis occupations and 1990 occ. ed.)	0.453 (0.074)	0.451	0.368 (0.059)	0.410	0.365 (0.070)	0.359	0.470 (0.106)	0.341
Women								
1972 to 1975 (1970-basis occupations and occ. ed.)	0.459 (0.054)	0.430	0.449 (0.065)	0.387	0.420 (0.058)	0.382	0.390 (0.082)	0.316
1976 to 1980 (1970-basis occupations and occ. ed.)	0.411 (0.056)	0.376	0.468 (0.067)	0.390	0.341 (0.065)	0.318	0.284 (0.075)	0.243
1982 to 1985 (1970-basis occupations and occ. ed.)	0.268 (0.041)	0.312	0.302 (0.056)	0.308	0.296 (0.077)	0.252	0.256 (0.071)	0.240
1986 to 1990 (1970-basis occupations and occ. ed.)	0.209 (0.041)	0.246	0.346 (0.048)	0.349	0.238 (0.064)	0.217	0.256 (0.075)	0.223
1988 to 1991 (1980-basis occupations and 1990 occ. ed.)	0.208 (0.051)	0.225	0.292 (0.054)	0.293	0.322 (0.076)	0.278	0.291 (0.086)	0.257
1993 to 1996 (1980-basis occupations and 1990 occ. ed.)	0.300 (0.045)	0.335	0.319 (0.043)	0.336	0.245 (0.055)	0.234	0.314 (0.075)	0.293
1998 to 2000 (1980-basis occupations and 1990 occ. ed.)	0.190 (0.045)	0.208	0.224 (0.042)	0.245	0.309 (0.051)	0.298	0.196 (0.071)	0.177
2002-2004(1980-basis occupations and 1990 occ. ed.)	0.261 (0.049)	0.269	0.280 (0.044)	0.316	0.311 (0.048)	0.312	0.400 (0.054)	0.392
2006 (1980-basis occupations and 1990 occ. ed.)	0.359 (0.059)	0.415	0.230 (0.070)	0.228	0.308 (0.070)	0.289	0.418 (0.091)	0.331

Table 12 Intergenerational Regressions of Occupational Income:
Nonblack Men and Women in the NORC General Social Survey, 1972 to 2006

Group and variables	Age 25 to 34		Age 35 to 44		Age 45 to 54		Age 55 to 64	
	b	r	b	r	b	r	b	r
Men								
1972 to 1975 (1970-basis occupations and occ. inc.)	0.180	0.177	0.276	0.253	0.241	0.217	0.243	0.237
	(0.058)		(0.067)		(0.063)		(0.062)	
1976 to 1980 (1970-basis occupations and occ. inc.)	0.204	0.204	0.247	0.230	0.287	0.245	0.174	0.160
	(0.055)		(0.037)		(0.074)		(0.074)	
1982 to 1985 (1970-basis occupations and occ. inc.)	0.150	0.147	0.201	0.191	0.220	0.207	0.309	0.263
	(0.057)		(0.066)		(0.074)		(0.079)	
1986 to 1990 (1970-basis occupations and occ. inc.)	0.179	0.164	0.119	0.115	0.307	0.275	0.300	0.254
	(0.056)		(0.053)		(0.067)		(0.086)	
1988 to 1991 (1980-basis occupations and 1990 occ. inc.)	0.133	0.129	0.103	0.102	0.250	0.223	0.294	0.278
	(0.063)		(0.057)		(0.080)		(0.089)	
1993 to 1996 (1980-basis occupations and 1990 occ. inc.)	0.169	0.165	0.261	0.254	0.188	0.190	0.247	0.211
	(0.055)		(0.052)		(0.056)		(0.089)	
1998 to 2000 (1980-basis occupations and 1990 occ. inc.)	0.274	0.275	0.253	0.255	0.236	0.217	0.266	0.234
	(0.051)		(0.046)		(0.059)		(0.076)	
2002-2004 (1980-basis occupations and 1990 occ. inc.)	0.217	0.204	0.264	0.262	0.232	0.253	0.151	0.147
	(0.059)		(0.052)		(0.049)		(0.062)	
2006 (1980-basis occupations and 1990 occ. inc.)	0.201	0.213	0.396	0.420	0.169	0.183	0.179	0.174
	(0.076)		(0.062)		(0.067)		(0.083)	
Women								
1972 to 1975 (1970-basis occupations and occ. inc.)	0.168	0.164	0.151	0.150	0.149	0.135	0.105	0.089
	(0.057)		(0.061)		(0.063)		(0.082)	
1976 to 1980 (1970-basis occupations and occ. inc.)	0.250	0.249	0.286	0.256	0.257	0.212	0.097	0.085
	(0.053)		(0.066)		(0.076)		(0.760)	
1982 to 1985 (1970-basis occupations and occ. inc.)	0.224	0.209	0.185	0.168	0.199	0.156	0.238	0.190
	(0.053)		(0.065)		(0.085)		(0.084)	
1986 to 1990 (1970-basis occupations and occ. inc.)	0.205	0.165	0.226	0.187	0.216	0.195	0.116	0.099
	(0.061)		(0.061)		(0.065)		(0.079)	
1988 to 1991 (1980-basis occupations and 1990 occ. inc.)	0.139	0.117	0.242	0.202	0.177	0.159	0.091	0.080
	(0.066)		(0.067)		(0.075)		(0.089)	
1993 to 1996 (1980-basis occupations and 1990 occ. inc.)	0.227	0.190	0.311	0.266	0.222	0.189	0.212	0.175
	(0.063)		(0.055)		(0.062)		(0.087)	
1998 to 2000 (1980-basis occupations and 1990 occ. inc.)	0.164	0.127	0.140	0.122	0.220	0.180	0.103	0.094
	(0.064)		(0.054)		(0.062)		(0.071)	
2002-2004 (1980-basis occupations and 1990 occ. inc.)	0.195	0.158	0.360	0.308	0.270	0.228	0.101	0.082
	(0.064)		(0.058)		(0.059)		(0.070)	
2006 (1980-basis occupations and 1990 occ. inc.)	0.263	0.251	0.117	0.092	0.330	0.257	0.372	0.275
	(0.076)		(0.090)		(0.085)		(0.099)	

stratification by occupation have remained essentially constant among American women over the past 25 years, while educational stratification has declined, even as there have supposed been increases in educational credentialism? Is there a relationship between this trend and women's increasing demands for economic parity or the increased participation of women in the labor market?

VII. Discussion

I hope that this analysis has raised more questions than it has answered. If occupations can be used to indicate economic standing, then ample data are available to measure economic persistence across generations in major population groups and to appraise trends and differentials in economic persistence. On the other hand, the relatively low levels of intergenerational persistence of the economic standing of occupations, relative to their educational standing, raises serious questions about the use of occupation as an economic proxy. Does this occur because occupations are a poor proxy for economic prospects, or does it occur because intergenerational economic persistence is less than that in social or cultural standing? If the latter, why should occupations be the vehicles for this form of intergenerational reproduction, rather than purely economic relations between the generations.

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美國代間經濟流動：測量、差異及趨勢

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摘要

經濟學的代間（如父代與子代）流動研究通常只有聚焦於經濟分配上的兩個極端——財產的繼承或是貧窮的延續。由於缺乏可靠與多時間點的測量，研究者無法針對收入或薪資來瞭解代間流動，以及代間流動隨時間的變化。一個變通的方法是使用職業的一般薪資所得來代表個人的收入或薪資。如此一來，分析資料就不再缺乏，因為有許多大型、具全國代表性的社會調查都有收集受訪者與父母親的職業。為了互相做比較，筆者以兩個指標將職業做表列，一是職業的一般教育程度，另一是職業的一般收入。筆者使用一九六二年與一九七三年的「代間職業變動調查」、一九八六到一九八八年的「收入與計劃參與調查」及從一九七二年到二〇〇六年的「社會綜合調查」等資料做分析，將樣本依年齡分組，並使用職業的一般教育程度與職業的一般收入做指標，估算長達三十五年的代間經濟流動趨勢。當職業以一般教育程度而非以一般收入作為指標時，代間流動較弱。舉例來說，就非裔之外的美國人而言，前者（教育程度）的代間相關係數約是0.37，而後者（收入）約只有0.21。此項發現意涵經濟代間流動與社會代間流動之間有明顯差異，是有趣且引人深思的議題。儘管代間職業流動程度因種族與性別不同而有所差異，但整體來說，從一九六〇年代到一九九〇年代，無論是以職業的一般教育程度或是以職業的一般收入做為指標，父代與子代之

間的職業流動並沒有隨時間而改變。不過，對非裔美國人來說，代間職業流動程度有減少的趨勢。對非裔之外的美國人而言，以職業的一般教育程度做為指標時，代間流動程度有增加的趨勢。

關鍵詞：代間流動、社會流動、經濟流動、職業地位