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## 14 Sociology of Work and Occupations

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ECONOMIC SOCIOLOGY is said to be "[a] sociological perspective applied to economic phenomena" (Smelser and Swedberg 1994, n. 1). But to what extent is work an "economic phenomenon"? Of course, there are 135 million people in the American paid labor force. But in addition, nearly all American adults do housework on a regular basis, and tens of millions of them take care of children and other relatives. About half of adult Americans do some charity work in a given year, and nearly two-thirds do some home improvement. But other than the wage work, none of this immense effort appears in national labor statistics as "economic phenomena."<sup>1</sup> Sociologists of work have usually followed this statistical focus on paid work in the labor force, as I shall myself in most of this chapter. However, I shall begin by considering in broad outline the major problem this focus sets aside: the shifting boundaries of market work.

### THE BOUNDARIES OF WORK

Marx taught us that the wage relationship is the most consequential single social relationship in modern society. Combined with kinship, it provides the wherewithal of survival to all but that tiny handful of the population dependent on direct state subsidy. And many of those subsidies derive definition and even eligibility from the wage relationship—most obviously worker's compensation and unemployment insurance, but in many places pensions and health insurance as well. But not all work is wage work. We need to reimagine non-wage forms of work—volunteer, domestic, hobby, and forced production—simply as other sectors of production, beyond the wage economy. At present, we define "sectors" only in terms of the product division of labor, and only in terms of that portion of the product division of labor that produces for the cash economy. Adopting this new image would create two cross-cutting types of sectors, allowing us to pose much more generally the ques-

tion of what kinds of work are located where, when, why, how, and by whom.<sup>2</sup>

Thinking about this new grid of sector/product cells is important because among these "residual" cells are some massive arenas of production. For example, child day-care services are now an industry of about 44,000 taxable establishments and \$8 billion (SA:771). If we directly impute the annual-payroll-per-employee figure for taxable day-care establishments (\$10,167) to the 34.6 million (SA:56) family households in the United States (as if each household contained one worker doing as much child care per year as an average full-time paid day-care worker—surely a conservative estimate), we would have a \$350 billion payroll, about 11 percent of the total payroll of all waged industries (SA:545). In reality, the amount should be much larger; national calculations put total unpaid household labor at a little over half of total wage income (Eisner 1989, 23-24). Students' unpaid "work" in school (valued by the opportunity cost of not working full-time in the student years, Eisner 1989, 41-42) is worth another one-sixth. Or again, the average volunteer works 3.5 hours per week (SA:396). That comes to three or four weeks of labor a year, from about half of the adult population. Although dwarfed by the figures for child care, this too is a large output, estimated to be about one-fifth of the total current labor bill of the nonprofit sector (Eisner 1989, 37, 184). Thus even in the highly marketized United States the cash economy interpenetrates with extensive and equivalent unpaid activities.

Because the situation is more extreme in less marketized economies, it is the economic anthropologists who have perforce taken the issue of market boundaries most seriously. In the classical anthropological literature, work comprised all those things involved in "getting a living" (Herskovitz 1965). To be sure, the hazy interpenetration of "economic" and "noneconomic" endures in modern societies, as the British sociological students of "means of livelihood" have shown (Gershuny 1983; Pahl 1984). But where these latter

writers emphasized a move of productive work from wage employment back into the family, the economic anthropologists had more often emphasized the inseparable twining of what in the West were seen as the antipodes of work and leisure, a theme starting as early as Evans-Pritchard's work on the Nuer (1940) and epitomized in Sahlins's (1972, chap. 1) colorful labeling of the hunter-gatherer economy as "the original affluent society."

Economic anthropology was riven in the 1960s and 1970s by a controversy between formalists who wanted to apply standard economic theory worldwide and substantivists who followed Polanyi (1957), Sahlins (1972), and others in believing that primitive societies had fundamentally different economic logics. At the heart of this debate was precisely the same issue that is today central to economic sociology, the nature and degree of the separation between economic practices and other aspects of social life. The substantivists (and most of economic anthropology since) insisted on the embeddedness of productive activity in other systems of social life.<sup>3</sup> This concept of embeddedness was taken to the limit by Marxist anthropologists who argued for the absolute unity of production and reproduction in a "domestic community" where production and distribution unfolded through the exchange of labor, goods, and women between different age and lineage groups of men. When export capitalism arrived, it found this exchange cycle an ideal supplier of reserve labor flexibly backstopped by a domestic production sector, a pattern famously described by Meillassoux ([1975] 1981) for West African villages and later commonly delineated in new economies (e.g., Salaff 1981) and developing cities (e.g., Cabanes 2000). In this view, the "disembedding" of the market economy was merely apparent, since it required for its sustenance a correlative domestic sector to meet the labor demand peaks of good times while absorbing the excess labor in bad times. In sum, for the economic anthropologists the question of the boundaries of the market has been a central question.

The great cross-sectional differences between societies in levels and forms of marketization are of course echoed in enormous change over time within single societies. Folbre and Nelson (2000, 126) argue that as late as 1870, "40% of the entire productive labor force (paid and unpaid, male and female) was made up of full-time homemakers." By the end of the Second World War, the figure was down to about 30 percent and by 2000 to about 16 percent. Why did this happen? And why did it happen to the kinds of work that it did? So-

cial work was volunteer work in 1880, but was paid work by 1920. Friendly advice was a personal commonplace (or freely available from clergy, doctors, and other notables) in 1880, but had become a \$4.2 billion psychotherapy industry a century later (Olfson and Pincus 1994).

The move of child care, food preparation, homemaking, and distinterested advice into the market sector should not blind us to the fact that perhaps as many things have moved out of the market sector as have moved in. Much of housework was in fact paid labor prior to the Second World War. When paid domestic service declined precipitously after the war, the work was left undone or demarketized. Also demarketized has been the local delivery of goods and services. Gone are milkmen, diaper services, and doctors who make house calls. Americans go to the supermarket and the doctor's office and do not get paid for transporting themselves, any more than they are paid to bring home their milk and diapers in cars whose gas they now pump for themselves. Although national-level delivery has undergone a renaissance because of catalogue and Internet orders, local delivery—230,000 workers in 1910—is gone completely. Thus, the question of what work is where in the various work sectors—wage, domestic, hobby, volunteer, forced—is not at all a residual question, but one of the central questions of economic sociology.<sup>4</sup>

The other great boundary of work is with leisure, now usually defined as time for self-realization. Oddly enough, many theories assume that people ultimately desire work for self-realization, whether from an instinct to workmanship (Veblen) or from an artisanal desire to produce a complete, unalienated product (Proudhon, Marx). Seidman's (1991) study of the Popular Fronts in Paris and Barcelona in the 1930s shows the dangers of this assumption, for massive resistance to work emerged under both bourgeois and worker-controlled regimes. But more important, Seidman's book points toward the tangled relation of work, workers, and organized leisure that became of central historical importance in the 1920s and 1930s. Analysis of the American case comes from Hunnicutt's (1988, 1996) studies, with their focus on the new ideology of "economic growth" and "leisure through consumption" in the period 1920–40. A central creation of this period was a consumption society—that is, a society that expected nonwork time to be filled by the purchase of enjoyment with discretionary income, rather than to be used up in what Keynes once facetiously called "psalms and sweet music."<sup>5</sup>

The boundary between leisure and work is hopelessly obscure. For leisure time is used not only for consumption but also for that sector of personal production called hobbies. Moreover, not only do people undertake productive activities in their leisure time, they also undertake large amounts of "leisure" activity in their work time, as Hochschild (1997) and many others have noted. This issue—which we might call the dilution of work—has been studied from many points of view: in the "work discipline" literature, in the literature on new forms of surveillance and resistance, in the old "informal relations in bureaucracy" literature, and even the literature on plant closings and their social impact. All these make it clear that for a broad variety of workers the separation of work and social life considered by many theorists to be the essential mark of modern economies is either crumbling or nonexistent.<sup>6</sup>

#### THE LEXIS STRUCTURE OF WORK

I turn now to sociological studies of work in their more usual sense of the examination of paid labor in modern societies. For perhaps three decades, the majority of sociological writing about work in the United States has circled around two topics: inequality among workers and the control and organization of work (Abbott 1993). To the general reader, the implicit message of this literature is that large social forces push small individuals around. Exogenous, "historical" things like managerial ideologies, technological development, market efficiency, legal and institutional changes, and various forms of discrimination dictate the vicissitudes of individuals who are more or less solitarily seeking "unalienated work," "satisfying careers," or "returns to education." Despite its veneer of history, this literature is quite static. Since it assumes a dominant configuration of work within which individuals' qualities have their effects, it cannot explain change either in that configuration or in the larger forces that provide the causality that flows through it.

Most of this literature is also quite unsociological. In neoclassical economics (and large portions of sociology), workers are a statistical mass, possessed individually of various qualities (gender, education, skill, and so on) that determine their wage outcomes. Even institutionalists and Marxists have sometimes been attracted to this notion of workers as an unstructured mass, a view implicit in their studies of capitalists' disci-

plining of random individuals into effective workers.

Because of this individualistic slant, it is about workers as an unconnected, categorized mass that we know the most. The main body of empirical writing about work in social science examines the effect of individuals' categorical properties on wages and other individual outcomes.<sup>7</sup> To be sure, institutionalists and Marxists—unlike neoclassicals—have been attentive to many kinds of social structures among individual workers, considering workers' agglomeration into both ephemeral social movements and more durable solidarities like unions and professions that face the firms and employers on the other side of the wage relationship. But to things like employers' associations and trade associations there are no studied equivalents on the worker side of the wage relationship, other than solidarities by gender or sometimes by ethnicity/race. Yet there might in fact be many other such solidarities in terms of individual qualities or types of individual relations to production: by educational levels, say, or by age strata, or by preferences for certain sequences of types of work within the life course. For example, we do not usually think of workers' native languages as defining social structures in production, yet the history of occupations as work more generally is littered with examples where the language spoken has strongly constrained or facilitated the distribution of workers into specific places in production.<sup>8</sup>

Such secondary social structures among workers seem absent even from the best theoretical work. Charles Tilly, for example, has developed a dynamic and eclectic framework that has the conspicuous virtue of insisting that we historicize studies of work.<sup>9</sup> But much of his historicizing comes through more detailed attention to the "larger forces" taken for granted by the synchronic empirical literature on wages and inequality. The individual worker remains curiously unhistorical.

<sup>4</sup> Yet in practice not only do workers' categorical attributes define potentially important social structures within the labor force, workers' life courses provide much of the enduring historical structure of the world of work. For example, the workers retiring in the period 2000–2005 are not just an arbitrary group who happen to be retiring. On the contrary, they bring with them to the moment of the retirement decision quite specific historical baggage. Some of this baggage they can shed, like their educational level; it is not particularly consequential that they are on average considerably less educated than the current labor force. But some

of their historical baggage is very consequential. It matters very much that about half the male workers in this retiring cohort are veterans, with a variety of special benefits available to them. It matters very much that during their early work life the union wage and benefit premium was at peak values (peak values from which then-senior union workers did very well) but that it then declined rapidly at that point in their careers when they should have been stockpiling retirement money. The resources this cohort brings to retirement are thus decisively shaped by their historical labor experience; their past is encoded into their present. Because of this encoding, these 14 million people (the retiring segment of the 55–64 cohort in the American labor force, about 55 percent of them men) provide an enormous reservoir of continuity, of process and structure, underneath the changing surfaces of the work world of the United States in the last 40 years. That continuity comprises personal memory, common social and political experiences and attitudes, common patterns of material resources, and a substantial amount of common labor force experience. It also includes “common differences,” in the sense of cohort-specific distributions of differences—in education, training, aspiration, residence, language, politics, and so on. (The relative meaning of a college degree within cohort has changed enormously, to take a simple example.) Thus the continuity they provide is not merely a matter of the historical demography of labor, but also of the structural realities and possibilities that that historical demography creates.<sup>10</sup>

In short, we should not think of retirement in some abstract sense, even if we historicize by allowing that sense to change epochally. Every cohort will bring to retirement a varying set of things piled up by the history that they themselves have made and endured. Moreover, since retirement at any given moment involves several cohorts of potential retirees, even a period approach cannot capture the complexities that these various cohort segments bring to the totality of retirement at any given moment.

More broadly, at any given moment events and period changes are marking the experience of the various cohorts currently in the labor force. Some of these are long monotonic trends such as increasing formal education or the move of married women into the labor force. Others are more local and erratic events like fluctuations in the unemployment rate. Still others are complex structural and technological changes in the labor process. All of these mark cohorts indelibly—with characteris-

tic work trajectories, with skill and experience sets, with financial resources, with occupational and employment-specific advantage and disadvantage—and all of these marks are carried forward into the future. Note, too, that the phenomena resulting from this vast historical demographic structure include indirect effects that arise from the juxtaposition of the different cohorts and cohort segments. Such indirect effects are “structural,” synchronic, in the sense that they arise in cross-sectional situations at a given time. For example, in many an occupation the wearied survivors of an oversupplied generation sit at any given time quite uncomfortably with the easy winners of an undersupplied one, as many of us who survived academic boom-and-bust over the last 30 years can attest.

All of these markings and indirect effects encoded into the labor force I shall place under the umbrella term of the *labor opportunity structure*. For they do not constitute a fixed thing, but rather a set of possibilities and constraints within which various actors must work in the present. The labor opportunity structure is the invisible historical heritage correlative with the more easily seen historical heritage of work organizations—of unions and occupations and professions on the one hand, and of firms, cartels, and industrial relations on the other. And indeed correlative as well with the lineal heritage that carries forward technology and the division of labor. We see these other continuous histories—of organized groups and of tasks—quite well. But the labor opportunity structure is mostly invisible to us.

It is essential to note that period events—the “larger forces” of most models of work—are not exogenous to this system of historical structures. They are themselves enacted as part of it. For example, employers with new technical designs or bureaucratic conceptions cannot hire specific kinds of workers if those kinds of workers do not exist. The labor opportunity structure at any given moment, that is, forces employers to respond to its constraints. While employers may make do with nonoptimal workers in the short run, in the long run they must respond. They may transform the labor process to make use of existing labor and skill supply. They may force or facilitate migration or move production to new labor markets. They may support institutions to produce particular skills. Note that all of these actions depend on still other opportunity structures: of other workers available, of technological developments to exploit, of geographical differences in labor opportunities, of institutional structures to adapt. Examples are famil-

iar enough from the last century: European labor imports after the Second World War, the pull of women into the labor force for the “administrative revolution” (Lowe 1987), offshoring in the 1980s, and so on.

But the central fact is that there is no such thing as a “larger historical force.” Actors must always act within the constraints allowed by what is encoded into the historical present that confronts them. Cohort segments and managerial revolutions and technological change must all work through the same moment of the present.<sup>11</sup>

In reporting the literatures on work, I hope to bring this labor opportunity structure to visibility. I begin with a review of period changes, not because I am retreating to a conception of them as exogenous, but simply as a place to begin description. I then consider first the general experience of work (wages and benefits, working conditions, satisfaction), and second the work life course, in both cases sketching changes in these experiences across periods in order to evoke the underlying cohort experiences, about which we have very little direct information. This general discussion of cohort experience then serves as a starting point for some brief comments on how—within the context of the labor opportunity structure and the other historical structures of the work world—workers have made solidarities like occupations and professions, and how they and the employers have together created an organization of work.

Many of these areas are touched in other chapters, and I cover them very briefly here: gender, labor markets, education, immigration, industrial relations. Also, I have tried throughout to draw on empirical work from outside the United States as well as within it. But my underlying argument about the importance of labor’s historicity makes general comparison difficult. So, regrettably, my emphasis will perforce be on the United States.

#### LABOR REGIMES

Both in the United States and in Europe, a number of basic transitions define fairly clear periods in labor experience, what we might call labor regimes. In the United States, the first of these periods is the immigration era, lasting from about 1885 to the mid-1920s. In this era, the population over age 20 was from 20 to 25 percent foreign born, and immigration accounted for at least half of annual labor force expansion. The later years of this period saw (1) a fairly rapid aging of the labor

force as immigration matured, (2) the explosion of clerical work, and (3) the gradual decline of the immense casual labor force that had built the railroads and other infrastructure of American capitalism. The second period is what might best be called the transition era: the twenties with their stabilizing of employment relations, the thirties with their catastrophic unemployment, their labor conflict, and their creation of the welfare state, and the war with its many effects, from sudden deep declines in farmwork and domestic service to demand for married women in the civilian labor force. The third period comprises the glory years of postwar growth from 1945 to 1975. It began with the reabsorption of 12 million veterans into a civilian labor force of 54 million and the sudden extension of home ownership from a long-stable 45 percent of households to 60 percent in 15 short years.<sup>12</sup> These were years of relative labor peace (and ultimately of high union wage premiums), rapid growth of the service sector, and relatively stable employment over the individual life course. The fourth period—from 1975 to the present—is that of neoliberalism. It is a period marked by the resumption of large-scale legal and illegal immigration (actually these date from the 1960s), by legal and economic transformations that gutted the American manufacturing sector, and by a reshaping of labor and employment relations that left governments as the only major unionized workplaces and that seems to have lessened job stability and job security.<sup>13</sup>

Across these general periods have drifted a number of more steady processes. Two are particularly important. The first is the steady march of married women into the labor force, a march that began at least as early as the depression and that has continued steadily since. Women’s age-specific labor force participation rates (LFPRs) are now within about 15 percent of the LFPRs of men of equivalent ages, which implies that this three-quarter-of-a-century transformation is nearing completion. The second major trend is the related transition of the economy toward the services. Contrary to general belief, manufacturing never dominated American employment as did agriculture and as do services. The move toward a service economy started long before the late 1970s and 1980s with their conspicuous globalization and offshoring of manufacturing. The farm sector’s share of the American labor force fell steadily about 5 percent per decade from the turn of the century onward, and services broadly defined—professional workers, managers, clerical and sales workers, domestic



workers, and general services—absorbed nearly all those losses after 1920. Of course, that absorption reflects the flow of married women into the labor force (and the services), but even among men, the manufacturing sector grazed 50 percent of the labor force only briefly, around 1960.

These trends of feminization and servicization are shared throughout the developed economies. But in Western Europe, the periodic structure of labor history is somewhat different. The period from the 1880s to the First World War—roughly equivalent to America's age of labor immigration—was in Europe a period of a gradual move toward welfare capitalism combined with a steady crescendo of labor unrest. Rescued (in most cases) from that unrest by the nationalistic carnage of the First World War, the European work world spent the interwar period rebuilding its decimated labor forces. Parliamentary labor parties emerged, welfare state coverage increased. The various corporatist forces that in their extreme led to fascism transformed and strengthened many occupational organizations. Many of the French professional *ordres*, for example, got their present formation in the 1930s and under Vichy, as the German apprenticeship system did under Weimar and National Socialism (Krause 1996; Thelen and Kume 2001).

By contrast, the postwar period was Europe's great age of migrant labor, for the war destroyed so much of the working age population that country after country eventually turned to guest workers. A surprising amount of corporatism survived the wreckage of war, helping transform labor relations into the great tripartite system of government/labor/management that became the (occasional) envy of America in the 1980s. By the 1980s, however, much of Europe was facing dramatic unemployment as guest workers stayed on and swelled native labor forces now replenished from their postwar lows. Like the United States, several of the major European nations retrenched their welfare states and moved toward neoliberalism. At the same time, European labor systems retained a number of qualities absent in the United States; large part-time farm sectors that cushioned the vagaries of industrial employment, flexible production zones like southwestern Germany and northern Italy, fairly strong worker parties, and enduring, if sometimes retrenched, welfare states and corporatist politics. If we had to periodize the European case, then, the four periods would be welfare capitalism and its failure, the corporatist

recovery, the migrant recovery, and ambivalent neoliberalism.

As these periodizations make clear, most working lives in most modern economies have traversed at some point at least one major watershed of labor regime; some have crossed two. Individuals last longer than do the social structures of the work world. So it is to individuals, both by themselves and as cohort or intra- or cross-cohort structures, that we must look for the deep historicity of the world of work, a historicity that has consequences not only for them but also for the system as a whole. For example, the high unemployment rates in Europe in the 1980s (at a time of continuing immigration of foreign workers) are now understood to have derived in part from an unwillingness to take low-income, insecure jobs on the part of workers who had previously experienced the rapid rises in wages, skill, and security produced by the labor shortage in the postwar glory years. What mattered was the order of events and the encoding of that order into the minds of the existing labor supply (cf. Stalker 1994, 52).

#### THE INDIVIDUAL EXPERIENCE OF WORK

I shall consider the literature on the individual's work experience under two basic headings, looking first at the immediate qualities of that experience—wages, benefits, and satisfaction—and second at the life course organization of work, from labor force entry to retirement. Recall that for the present argument, these various aspects of work matter less as instantaneous or medium-run outcomes than as assets compounded over time. Wages, benefits, and satisfaction—the most studied topics in the literature—are of long-run importance only insofar as they are carried forward, encoded, into the future, by home ownership, long-running patterns of alienation, and the like. To be sure, they may also have an indirect long-run effect by providing in the short run the stimulus or foundation for collective action, a subject well studied by the new labor history and students of social movements. But in themselves, as individual outcomes, they are not historically important. Similarly, unemployment, underemployment, turnover, and so on matter not because they are the crucial descriptive contingencies of the work life course, but only insofar as they succeed in encoding themselves in ways that produce later consequences, first in the individual life

course, but more important as a part of the larger labor opportunity structure.

#### Immediate Qualities of Work

Real GNP in the United States grew about 2 percent per annum over the late migratory and transition eras: a little slower in the 1910s and 1930s, a little faster in the 1920s. Real growth took off during the war decade and averaged close to 4 percent per annum through the glory years, but in the neoliberal age it gradually slowed, falling back to below 3 percent in the 1990s. Distributional figures tell us where this growth went. Median real household income was stagnant in the 1930s, but increased quite rapidly in the glory years—about 20 to 25 percent or more per decade. By contrast, it stagnated again in the neoliberal era, rising only 12 percent in the 30 years 1970–2000. The total income shares of the top 20 percent and top 5 percent of the income distribution tell the same story; these fell steadily to the 1970s and then rose steadily afterward. The top 5 percent share declined more, troughed later, and has not yet “recovered” as much, facts that indicate that while the upper half of the income distribution has retained nearly all of the quite considerable growth since 1970, the proceeds have been shared somewhat more widely within the top sector of that moiety.<sup>14</sup>

There are many complexities to these figures, both causal and demographic (migration plays an important role in the neoliberal era, for example). But the general pattern—the whipsaw of the transition years, the strong absolute growth and relative equalization in the glory years, and the slower growth and rapid inequalization in the neoliberal years—has given each passing cohort burdens and advantages to carry forward. For example, for several cohorts the income bonanza of the glory years was converted with government assistance into permanent wealth in the form of home ownership (Jackson 1985). Owner-occupied households as a percentage of all households had fallen from 48 percent in 1890 to 43 percent by 1940 (with a brief peak in the 1920s). They rose to 54 percent in 1950 and 62 percent in 1960, and then took 40 years to rise another 6 percent to 68 percent in 1999.<sup>15</sup>

All this means that any cohort living a substantial portion of its work life during the glory years did well financially, both absolutely and in terms of relative equalization within cohort. Moreover,

these privileges were etched in stone in various ways—through home ownership and other wealth conversion, as well as through creation and expansion of welfare programs (e.g., Medicare in 1964), that seemed just and feasible to a society flush with resources. These cohorts' future behavior—as job changers, as retirees, as workers willing to risk new occupations—reflected this encoded body of resources.

About the encoding of such other immediate qualities of work as satisfaction, we are less clear. The concept of work satisfaction as currently used (that is, as the answer to point-blank survey questions) dates from the 1930s, which brought together brand-new survey techniques and the human relations school of management with its concern for worker attitudes. It is however by no means clear what a series of such answers means over time, especially for a single individual, a fact that has led many people who think about long-run patterns of satisfaction to look at behavioral measures like turnover, strikes, and the like. Turnover was more or less constant at about four to five hires per 100 employees per month from 1920 to 1980. (We do not know much about turnover after 1982 when the Bureau of Labor Statistics gave up collecting it for want of funding.) Strikes reached major peaks in the 1930s and again in the 1950s and early 1970s, as did the percentage of workers involved in a strike. It is not clear what this means in terms of worker satisfaction. Strikes are also a measure of union strength, and the United States reached its apogee of union membership midway through the glory years. Moreover, the union premium (the relative advantage of union members over others) rose throughout that period to its peak in the 1970s (Freeman and Medoff 1984, chaps. 3, 4). So it is hard to know whether to take strikes as measures of work dissatisfaction or of worker strength.

A central difficulty with the work satisfaction concept (as with most satisfaction concepts) is that its time scale of reference is unclear. Originally conceived as a management tool, satisfaction measures are generally tied to immediate concerns in the division of labor and assume a time horizon of weeks or months. Longer duration concepts of satisfaction are quite nebulous and are generally assimilated to the equally nebulous concept of career.<sup>16</sup>

One important boundary between wage work and the rest of experience is the temporal arrangement and extent of work. Workdays and the workweeks fell fairly rapidly from the 12-hour day

and 60-hour weeks of the late nineteenth century to the eight-hour days and 40-hour weeks enshrined in legislation in the late 1930s, whence they have not budged since, at least legally, despite some decline in practice due to sectoral shifts. In Europe the day shortened a little earlier, but 40-hour weeks generally postdate the war. (The legal week long remained at 48 hours in some European countries, although in practice most of Europe has been around 40 hours for 30 years or more. Europeans have been more willing than Americans to continue experimenting with work time.)

As for the longer rhythm of seasonality, it is surprisingly persistent in modern economies even though its roots in subsistence and part-time agriculture might have been expected to wither under advanced capitalist agriculture with its fewer workers for longer durations. In America, the seasonal farm labor force peaked in the early 1960s and has fallen off since, although seasonality remains characteristic of the immigrant labor pool from Mexico (Fritsch 1984). The small size of European nations and their enduring small-farm sectors have kept seasonality more influential there than in the United States.<sup>17</sup>

It is not clear whether or how temporality encodes something into the labor opportunity structure. Certainly daily and weekly experience shape time available for alternative activities decisively, and in that sense the early decline in hours created an openness in the labor opportunity structure that might have had important consequences, were the time used for moonlighting (never very widespread in America outside a narrow range of occupations) or for occupational organization and resistance. It seems, however, that the new nonwork time mostly went into leisure, which reduced its consequences for the future. Perhaps more important, however, is the demise of temporality as a political issue. Cohorts working in the immigrant and transition periods in the United States hoped for and indeed experienced a steady move toward shorter hours, while those since have not. Indeed, there are indications that work hours have grown longer for certain parts of the labor force—particularly what are called in America “salaried” workers (as opposed to “hourly” workers), who are assumed to work “whatever hours are necessary.”<sup>18</sup> It seems most likely that the desire for declining hours was a casualty of the new consumption society with its desire for growth, possession, and consumption-based leisure. Work hours have therefore had few long-run encoded consequences.

### Contingencies

Above the level of daily rewards and temporal conditions of work stands the larger logic of a work life course, through which these smaller temporal units are appended to a growing lifetime experience. This temporal trajectory of work unfolds through a characteristic set of patterns. Entry into the labor force is typically a long, gradual process through a series of part-time jobs. The majority of adults then spend about 30 to 40 years at work until retirements begin in the fifties. Throughout the main work trajectory there intervene varying contingencies: unemployment, underemployment, part-time work (voluntary or involuntary), contingent employment, removal from the labor force for parenting, and so on.

Until fairly recently, work typically ended for men not with retirement but with death; 69 percent of those over 65 were in the labor force in 1900. Spreading mandatory retirement and social support programs began in the 1930s to remove those men from work, and the period since 1950 has seen a steady further drop to the current rate of 16 percent participation for males over 65, a drop maintained since the end of mandatory retirement by financially coercive pension and social security arrangements (Kotlikoff and Wise 1989). Women over 65 have never worked in substantial numbers in the United States. Table 1 gives age-specific LFPRs for men and women throughout the twentieth century in the United States.

It is clear that the lifetime work period has been steadily compressed through the twentieth century, although in the process its edges have become quite fuzzy. The majority of the compression has come at the end of the work cycle and reflects the variety of factors conducing to retirement—increasing wealth, better health, cheap leisure, and pensions, the last often linked to retirement mandatory *de jure* or *de facto* (see Costa 1998, chap. 2). Another important determinant is the disappearance of the farm sector, which under its traditional mode of production had more uniform labor force participation over the life course than any other employment sector.

Unfortunately, there is no real literature on evolving patterns of completed careers. Early analysts of whole careers (Form and Miller 1949; Wilensky 1960, 1961) noted the characteristic career pattern of an initial part-time period, followed by a “testing” or “trial” period, and in turn followed by a more or less stable period. But we still do not know, for any large sample at any point,

TABLE 1. Age-Specific Labor Force Participation Rates (All figures in percent)

	1900	1920	1930	1940	1950	1960	1970	1980	1990	1999
<i>Men</i>										
<20	66.9	52.6	41.1	34.4	35.5	35.7	56.1	60.5	55.7	52.9
20–24	93.1	91.0	89.9	88.0	75.3	79.6	83.3	85.9	84.4	81.9
25–34	96.3	} 97.2	97.3	95.2	88.2	90.8	96.4	95.2	94.1	93.3
35–44	96.6		97.6	94.7	92.0	93.2	96.9	95.5	94.3	92.8
45–54	95.5	} 93.8	96.5	92.1	89.8	93.3	94.3	91.2	90.7	88.8
55–64	90.0		90.2	83.8	81.7	83.3	83.0	72.1	67.8	67.9
>65	68.4	60.1	58.3	41.5	40.8	30.6	26.8	19.0	16.3	16.9
<i>Women</i>										
<20	28.2	28.4	22.8	18.7	22.2	23.9	44.0	52.9	51.6	51.0
20–24	30.8	38.1	42.4	45.1	42.7	44.9	57.7	68.9	71.3	73.2
25–34	19.9	} 22.4	27.8	32.9	31.7	35.3	45.0	65.5	73.5	76.4
35–44	15.6		22.6	26.9	34.9	42.6	51.1	65.5	76.4	77.2
45–54	14.7	} 17.1	20.4	22.1	32.8	46.7	54.4	59.9	71.2	76.7
55–64	13.2		16.1	16.4	23.4	35.0	43.0	41.3	45.2	51.5
>65	9.1	8.0	8.0	5.9	7.8	10.3	9.7	8.1	8.6	8.9

much less over time, what is the distribution of types of careers. This has been in large part for want of methodological tools.<sup>19</sup>

I begin with education, thought by many to be an essential resource for the labor force, and, of course, extremely highly correlated with wages and other rewards at the individual level. The large literature on education and work (see Mary Brinton’s chapter in this volume) does not generally study education within the historical demographic framework followed here. We are accustomed either to think of education as a kind of period change—“the high schools expanded rapidly in the 1920s,” we say, as if this meant a sudden change in education levels society-wide—or to enter education as one more variable in our equations, forgetting that over any medium-scale elapsed period education’s main historical effects are uniformly colinear with age because of period changes. (Therefore our models measure only education’s local, relative effects, not its more general, structural ones.) In fact, cohort education levels are set in youth and change little after age 25, at least prior to the expansion of community colleges in the 1960s. They therefore constitute one of the essential constraints imposed by the labor opportunity structure.

To see this, it suffices to think carefully about the educational level of the labor force.<sup>20</sup> The 1905–10 birth cohort was the first cohort to show a real leap in high school education, but they were

not securely in the labor force until the late 1920s. Since median school completion rose about one year per quinquennium, the 1920–25 birth cohort was the first one to enter the labor force with half its members having completed high school, but entered the labor force only in the early war years. Viewed from the other end, the last “grade school” cohort (median education below 9.0 years, the 1900–1905 cohort) did not hit retirement (65) until around the late 1960s, well into the epoch of “postindustrial society”! The impact of college has been similarly delayed. Higher education exploded after the war with the GI Bill and increasing women’s education, an explosion continued by the community college revolution of the 1960s and 1970s. We are accustomed to think of this development as revolutionizing the American workforce. But of course these students leavened the labor force only gradually, and indeed the expansion was much slower than the high school one. Forty years after the real takeoff of higher education around 1960, college completion even among whites has just reached the level of a quarter of the population over 25.

This excruciatingly slow educational upgrading of the labor force of course provided one of the great constraints on usable technology and shop floor divisions of labor in manufacturing and service production. Obvious evidence for this is the hijacking of the community colleges—which were originally planned to bring liberal education to the

masses—by a business community desperate for workers trained in new skills (Brint and Karabel 1989). Nor is it surprising that by the 1980s, business was itself spending on internal training an amount commensurate with the entire higher education budget of the United States (Eurich 1985; see also the data on training in Parnes et al. 1970–75, vol. 4).

After school comes the “school-to-work transition.” Recent studies of high school work make it clear that this transition is largely a myth, although we do not know for how long and for whom it has been a myth. Sample data put about half of full-time high school students in the labor force, with an average workweek, for the eleventh and twelfth graders, of about 20 hours (Mortimer and Shanahan 1994). Ninth and tenth graders work extensively in the informal economy—mowing lawns and babysitting—positions they seem to desert as soon as the law allows them to move to the formal economy. It is not clear how far back this pattern goes historically. Hollingshead (1949) seems to indicate that the working high school students in Elmtown in the early 1940s were more likely to be those of lower socioeconomic status, but overall LFPRs fell for both men and women under 20 from 1900 to about 1940, whence they rose to 1980. (The close parallel of the two sets of rates questions the usual interpretation, according to which schooling drove the early decline and the return of service men to civilian life drove the later rise.) Like most age-specific LFPRs, these have moved toward gender equality, the young men having fallen back since 1980 to 53 percent, roughly equalling the women’s 51 percent.

An unknown but undoubtedly quite substantial portion of teenage work takes place in the illegal economy. Ethnographies of the drug trade make it clear that the drug industry (both in retail sales and in related work such as lookout, messenger, etc.) actually employs a substantial fraction of officially “unemployed” urban youth. We know relatively little about the total extent of this employment, which like most informal work is often episodic and part-time, and would be difficult to conceptualize and measure even if we could survey it more directly.<sup>21</sup>

At present, work during college seems close to universal. Even at elite colleges, few students spend four years without working during term. And the recent emergence of summer recruiting internships creates yet another link smoothing the connection of education and work (a connection infinitely smoother in Germany, for example, with its

highly structured apprenticeship system). The universality of college work probably reflects the expanded coverage of education (to people who have to finance it by part-time work and debt) as much as it does a change in the college experience per se. In 1940 only about 5 percent of the population over 25 had gone to college. Over half of a cohort of eighteen-year-olds now begins college. In a way, then, we can think of education as something that has expanded into the life-period of work, rather than vice versa.<sup>22</sup>

The various tracks that lead into full-time employment are thus mostly gradual transitions through part-time work during schooling of various levels. The school-to-work transition—which may have been a fixture of prewar employment for some of the labor force—is now almost completely a mirage. In terms of the labor force opportunity structure, there is here no story of encoded period effects, as there is with educational level. Rather, there are some differences encoded into the labor force: educational debt for some people to carry forward but not others, employment (hoped to be) relevant to future occupation in some cases, but not in most, and so on. But the main quality of this part of the labor force is precisely that it has no memory, that it encodes next to nothing. For it is made up of workers who will spend brief periods in generic occupations that do not dictate workers’ futures nor give them much—skills, debts, assets, connections, constraints—to take forward. As of 1987, for example, the median age of food counter, fountain, and related workers was 18.8. Their cumulative (all spells added together) occupational duration was 1.5 years (sampled at a moment, so the expected total duration is roughly twice that). For busboys and other food service assistants, the figures were 20.3 and 1.7, for short-order cooks, 20.9 and 2.5, for private household child-care workers, 21.9 and 2.7 (Carey 1988). These are high-turnover occupations, for young people who aim to make some money mostly for consumption although sometimes for educational expenses. Such occupations are without any real implications. From employers’ point of view, the “opportunity” provided by this part of the labor force is precisely that its sense of the irrelevance of the occupation for its future gives this area of employment a spot market quality not found elsewhere.<sup>23</sup>

There is to be sure one drastic form of transition to work. For a very large number of American men in the middle and late twentieth century, their first full-time, regular employment was with the mili-

tary. In 1950, for example, veterans were nearly 40 percent of the 20–24 male cohort of the labor force and nearly 80 percent of the 25–34 male cohort. For a huge portion of these, military service had been their first full-time work.<sup>24</sup> Veteran status is a central constituent of the labor opportunity structure; during the glory years, the total veteran proportion of the male labor force never went much below 40 percent. The age composition of this group changed slowly as the Second World War veterans aged, but the draft for Vietnam recreated the pattern of young veterans and pushed the total male labor force proportion of veterans to around 50 percent. Even the steady move of married women into the labor force did not offset this rise; the total veteran proportion of the labor force held constant at around 30 percent until the late 1970s.

The impact of this encoded experience was enormous. The stability of American labor regimes in the glory years was founded on the veteran-worker and indeed the veteran-boss. (The male labor force is now only about 20 percent veterans, the total labor force 12 percent veterans.) Accustomed to a large organization with a thick and often irrational command hierarchy, the veterans found themselves in quite familiar settings as civilian employees of giant organizations, under the same kinds of bosses they had had in the service. This massive memory, far more than the prescriptions of the human relations school of management, undergirded the successful move Edwards (1979) notes toward bureaucratic control in the American workplace. More recently, the disappearance of this reservoir of personal training and of this mechanism for induction into the world of large organizations has undoubtedly had major consequences for U.S. workforce control since the 1980s.

Perhaps more important, millions of young workers brought home the enlisted/officer/enemy model that any enlisted man remembers (“we hate our officers but we hate the enemy [or the Army in general] more”). Without thinking, they probably made it their model for labor relations. The surprising turn of American labor toward bread-and-butter bargaining, away from the strongly confrontational labor tactics and grand demands of the 1930s (Stepan-Norris and Zeitlin 2003) probably owes much to this transposition. No longer was it “us versus them.” It was “us versus them versus THEM.”<sup>25</sup>

A work life begun in the teens or twenties is interrupted by various contingencies. The simplest

of these is job change, which most studies have defined as change of employer (rather than of occupation or occupation within employer). The distribution of job turnovers in a typical lifetime is unknown for many cohorts in the American labor force. Labor turnover occurred at extraordinary rates in the United States prior to the 1920s. The first serious figures (around 1920) put turnover (the average of accessions and departures) at about 10 per 100 employees per month in the relatively stable firms surveyed. Turnover fell to around half that level by the mid-1920s, where it remained until doubling again during the war years, then falling back to an even lower figure (around four per 100) from the 1950s until figures stopped being kept in the Reagan era. The sudden decline in turnover in the mid-1920s is undoubtedly related to the sudden ending of mass immigration in that period. The great stability since is somewhat puzzling.

Aggregate turnover figures are grossly misleading. In a definitive enterprise-based study, Brissenden and Frankel (1922) showed the now familiar (and still true) facts that unskilled workers, young workers, and female workers all turn over much faster than others and that the majority of turnover comes from rapid churning of short-stay employees in a relatively small number of slots. Over half the separating employees in their data—skilled or unskilled—had served three months or less (1922, 132). Thus the 100 percent turnover figure commonly quoted for industrial employment in the migratory period masks huge synchronic differences in employment stability. The surprise—both then and now—is not how little stability there is in the labor force, but how stability and turnover exist side-by-side. Because turnover is highly duration-dependent, the distribution of work life courses with various levels of turnovers and tenures is highly skewed.

The depression and the Second World War of course interrupted many job tenures, but it seems almost certain that typical tenures grew longer in the glory years. In a 1954 review of available work, Parnes (1954, 69) concluded that about 20 percent of the labor force was continuously employed by one employer during the 1940s, and that over a third had only one employer, but perhaps did not work continuously over the same period. These figures were higher than the Brissenden and Frank numbers on the 1910s, and later figures were higher still, as table 2 shows.

Tenures flattened (or fell) in the later glory years, a fact that is clearer if one corrects for com-



TABLE 2. Turnover Figures

	Median Current Tenure (in years)				>10 Years (in percent)			
	Male		Female		Male		Female	
	White	Black	White	Black	White	Black	White	Black
Briss/Frank 1913-4	2.9		2.4		14.9		9.4	
BLS 1951 (MLR Oct 1963)	4.0	3.1	2.3	1.7	21.4	13.2	10.7	6.5
BLS 1963 (MLR Oct 1963)	5.9	4.1	3.0	2.9	35.3	27.5	20.7	19.3
BLS 1973 (MLR Dec 1974)	4.7	4.0	2.8	3.3	30.7	23.7	17.9	18.4
BLS 1978 (MLR Dec 1979)	4.6	3.7	2.6	3.6	28.8	25.8	15.3	19.3

positional changes (chiefly the baby boom's entry to the high-turnover early work years). Although comparison can be difficult, a review of recent analyses by Neumark (2000) suggests (continuing) modest declines in job stability (turnover) and job security (involuntary turnover) in the neoliberal period. Most studies seem to indicate that this effect was stronger during the 1970s than the 1980s, but that the 1990s brought some instability and insecurity to higher status and older groups that had not known it before. Like many other labor statistics, the trends seem reversed for men and women—the former looking a little worse off, the latter perhaps a little better, the two converging. Overall, then, there is a fairly simple periodic history: a fairly decisive stabilization in the 1920s, a distinct lengthening of overall tenure by the Second World War and into the early glory years, and a slow, very gradual decline since some time in the late glory years.<sup>26</sup>

Turnover is not random in the life course. Hall's definitive 1982 paper rediscovered and deepened the argument of the earlier whole career literature that the early job history was filled with high-turnover jobs (on average six by age 30) and that, for a majority of the labor force in the glory years, the later career was filled with one or two long-duration jobs. At a given point (in 1978), 28 percent of the labor force was in jobs expected to last 20 years or more total and 43 percent in jobs expected to last 10 years or more total. Put another way, 40 percent of workers between 40 and 65 could expect 20 years or more on the job currently held.<sup>27</sup>

All of these studies sidestep the much thornier problem of occupational and skill change. In a much-cited study on a small sample in the early glory years, Wilensky (1960) showed that many workers who worked for a single employer for long periods changed occupations (jobs) very often

within that employer. Indeed, it was already known that at least a third of workers change broad occupation group over a decade, much less specific trajectories of change in occupation or in skills used has been difficult to investigate on an aggregate basis. (We thus have little idea whether the current vogue of "individual career growth" as an empirical practice and a human resources department ideology is really anything new.)

From a life course point of view, the main question about turnover concerns the likelihood that an individual will eventually secure one or more long-tenure employments. But our concern here is less with the life course organization of turnovers in itself than with the more dynamically important question of what that life course pattern means in terms of the encoded labor opportunity structure. Its main consequence is to increase the vulnerability of the labor force to demographic shocks. When a massive generation like the baby boom hits the narrow life course window for long tenures, there may—changes in the labor process and employment relation set aside—be fewer "long tenure" slots than can go around. For example, in 1999, 49 percent of the labor force was in the prime long-tenure years, age 35-54; in 1970, the figure had been 40.3 percent. Thus, recent cries of "declining job security" probably have compositional origins.

A more dramatic contingency is unemployment. We are fortunate to have a number of distinguished works on unemployment—of the concept (Salais, Baverez, and Reynaud 1986), of unemployment relief as a policy (Harris 1972), and even of unemployment as an experience (Keyssar 1986; Burnett 1994). As with turnover, instantaneous rates of unemployment are much better known than is its total incidence over the life course. American unemployment rates fluctuate pretty

steadily with business cycles. They have reached 7 percent to 10 percent at some point in nearly every decade since 1890 and have gone below 3 percent at some point in most decades. They are highly skewed in terms of occupation (high among laborers and factory workers in the past few decades), of race (black rates are typically twice those of whites), of age (young workers, particularly those under 20, are very likely to be unemployed), and of education. The last is perhaps the most dramatic of these correlations; unemployment rates for those who have not finished high school run four or more times those of college graduates for most demographic groups in the current U.S. labor force.

From a life course point of view, the persistence and recurrence of unemployment (like turnover) in the work histories of particular individuals is an important regularity, noted by a number of European scholars (e.g., Gallie and Paugam 2000). Layte et al. (2000) use multiple and diverse evidence to show that this persistence most likely reflects individual qualities less than it does location in a disadvantaged labor market or occupational area. But unemployment seems to be broadly experienced; Paugam (2000, 92), with a sample that while not nationally representative is close to national norms in most respects, finds that nearly 30 percent of French respondents have experienced unemployment of at least three months at some point in their careers.

Unemployment episodes in the United States typically last nine weeks (median), although 10 to 15 percent last six months or more. (See Kaitz 1970 for a useful technical discussion.) The same mathematical issues arise with unemployment as with job tenure, and thus like job tenure, unemployment duration is longer than cross-sectional data make it seem, in the sense that the majority of months of unemployment that are experienced come in the guise of long-duration unemployment, just as the majority of employment years that individuals experience are in tenures longer than turnover data and current spell-length would lead one to expect (Akerlof and Main 1981). A further problem is that an unknown but substantial number of unemployment episodes are actually filled with employment in the informal economy and in domestic production of various kinds. (These tend to disappear in official statistics, because in most countries such employment would jeopardize unemployment benefits.) It is a striking fact that unemployment support regimes in Europe correlate closely with family patterns (Gallie

and Paugam 2000). Countries with extensive family dependence—and relatively strong family production—tend to have minimal unemployment benefits, relying on the family production sector to provide protection and nonmarket employment. (This is Meillassoux [1975] 1981 all over again.) Unemployment is thus a complex kind of event, tied to "sectoral" change between wage, domestic, and informal production as much as it is to the conjunctures of the wage economy. However, it is not clear what if any are the encoded implications of unemployment experience for the labor opportunity structure. By contrast, the next work life contingency—nonstandard employment relations—has fairly clear implications.

Alongside full-time, full-year (FTFY) wage/salary labor is a wide variety of alternative wage arrangements. As noted earlier, casual, high-turnover employment is both old and endemic in the American labor force. Through the immigrant and transition periods, hobo labor force—hoboes were the core casual labor force—iterant, young, male workers working large construction projects in the summer and labor-intensive harvests in the fall. The large-scale hobo labor force shrank during the depression and almost disappeared after the war.<sup>28</sup>

But while the old strongholds of casualism have drastically declined, a variety of new non-FTFY employment forms have emerged in the white-collar labor force. "Contingent employment" is work that has some formal time limit: a month, a year, up to (in the case of assistant professors) six years. (This is the French *contrat à durée déterminée* [CDD].) It covers about 5 percent of the American labor force. Part-time employment, defined variously in various countries (Kalleberg 2000), usually means working less than about 80 percent of legally established full-time status, although, as I noted earlier, the actual "full-time" workweek varies widely from sector to sector. The U.S. labor force is about 20 percent part-time. Finally, alternative employment arrangements (AEAs) refer to nonstandard legal relations between employer and employee; they include independent contract relations (direct contracts for particular services with limited benefits), on-call work (work available only when the employer needs it, e.g., substitute teaching), working for a temporary agency, and subcontract employment (working for a firm that subcontracts services to other firms). AEAs involve about 8 to 10 percent of the American labor force. These various categories of course overlap in various ways.<sup>29</sup>

Part-time work spread steadily in the labor force

in the glory years (it was a little over 10 percent of the labor force in 1950). In part, the growth has reflected sectoral change; the service sector has more part-time jobs. It also seems to have reflected life course factors. Part-time work is concentrated among women and men outside the prime employment years. Part-time work is a little lower in the European Union than in the United States, although with much variation and although it has been increasing rapidly in the past decade.

Most AEAs are life-stage phenomena, from the point of view of the worker. Thus, independent contractors tend to be white males who chose the arrangement, often over 65, with lower contingency rates, higher salary and benefit rates, and longer job tenure in job than other AEAs. Independent contracting is obviously a method of gradual retirement. By contrast, contract workers are generally young men, working full-time, most often in security or technology, with high wages and fairly long tenure for AEA arrangements. A total contrast are temporary agency workers, who are more likely women (53 percent), with children (30 percent have a preschooler), young (25 percent of them under 25), working in clerical and machine operator positions (72 percent). Few (27 percent) prefer working this way, few are covered by insurance (temporary agencies and their workers are often free riding on an employed spouse's benefits), over half are contingent, and the median tenure is very brief. Finally, on-call workers are more of a sectoral or occupational phenomenon than a life course one. On-call work is very high in two traditional women's professions (teaching and nursing), as it is for men in transportation, construction, and unskilled labor.

Contingent work is far more common in Europe than in the United States; the EU rate is about 12 percent (fixed-term contracts as a percentage of all employment contracts). A detailed French study shows that temporary employment is directly related to an increase in "flexibility" (more autonomous work decisions and less hierarchical orga-

nization), but also to increasing temporal constraints, production speeds, and quality surveillance (Paugam 2000). A recent study of Japan (Gill 2001, 201) also notes a distinct rise in time-limited employees—to 7.5 percent—which couples with self-employed without employees (9 percent), family workers without contracts (5.4 percent), and day laborers (1.8 percent) to locate nearly a quarter of the Japanese labor force in various forms of nonstandard employment.

In sum, while definitions vary, forms of nonstandard employment are spreading quite rapidly in the developed world and are in most cases concentrated among women, young people, untrained workers, and retirees. These modifications of the FTFY model seem to reflect a massive change in the labor opportunity structure—the entry (in some cases reentry) into the labor force of individuals (married women, women with children, high school and college students, individuals gradualizing their retirements) who have reasons for desiring or requiring non-FTFY schedules.<sup>30</sup> This effect can be most easily seen for women. As table 3 shows, the female share of the labor force in the first half of the twentieth century grew at the expense of boys and very young men—the heart of the old casual labor force. The backbone of the patriarchal labor force—men in the breadwinner years—held absolutely steady at half the total jobs in the labor force through 1950 (as did older men at 10–12 percent of the labor force). As a total proportion of the labor force, the male-breadwinner age group declined—sharply but uniquely—during the glory years, recovering slightly when the baby boom fully entered it around 1990. Thus, it was the glory years that saw the major expansion of that portion of the labor force characteristically associated with non-FTFY and more casual arrangements (Hall 1982 shows that women's typical tenures were shorter than men's), and not surprisingly part-time work expanded steadily in parallel.

The long-run implication has been that after the glory years employers faced a labor force more of

TABLE 3. Labor Force Share

	1900	1920	1930	1940	1950	1960	1970	1980	1990	1999
Percentage of LF Female	18.1	20.5	22.0	24.3	28.3	32.0	38.1	42.5	45.2	46.5
Percentage of LF Male 25–54	49.5	50.9	50.1	49.3	47.4	44.9	38.9	36.3	38.5	38.2
Percentage LF Female 25–54	8.1	10.5	12.0	14.6	18.0	20.4	22.0	26.1	29.8	33.4

which is empirically associated with non-FTFY work. Encoded into that labor force are more of the advantages and disadvantages associated with high-turnover work under unusual arrangements: increased flexibility and risk for both sides, reliance on on-the-job training, and free riding on breadwinners (parents for children, spouses for adults) for health and other benefits, for stable income, and so on. A correlative result is that the labor force is now a higher percentage of the population over 16 than ever before; the century-long increase in this figure has been steady except for momentary hesitations in 1930 for the depression and in 1965 before the maturing of the baby boom.

Few people spend their work lives in one place. Many—indeed most—geographical moves are dictated by the pushes and pulls of employment. Such labor migration can be loosely divided into internal and international. Internal labor migration we have already encountered in the casual and seasonal labor force. Migratory casual labor seems to be a life stage phenomenon, far more common among young men than any other group, but noncasual job-induced migration is extremely general in the population, probably dictating at least half of all changes of residence. International labor migration is of course one of the defining phenomena of modern labor regimes, and is particularly central to the history of the United States. The migrations up to 1924 are of definitional importance, and after a brief lull, the annual inflow has increased (from near zero) almost monotonically since 1945. During the one era when immigration doors were officially closed, the United States imported foreign labor formally under the bracero program (1942–64) in whose peak year (1956) there were 445,000 braceros (of about two million farm laborers by census estimate).<sup>31</sup>

From the cohort/encoding point of view adopted here, it is important to note, first, that much labor migration is temporary. The United States, for example, is estimated to have lost about one-third of those who emigrated to it between 1900 and 1980. Second, international labor migration is generally youthful. While older people do migrate, much of international labor migration is a temporary expedient of young people seeking high wages (often 10 to 50 times those of the sending country), without long-run plans. This is particularly true for illegal migration, which is estimated to be about 20 percent of the total inflow to the United States. Third, international labor migration, although common for skilled workers, is more generally a phenomenon of unskilled workers (Stalker 1994).

The central implications of migration, particularly international migration, for the labor opportunity structure lie of course in its provision of a safety valve, a reserve of workers ready to fit into places unfilled by home labor supply. This is true regionally as well as internationally, although generally employers have preferred regional relocation rather than cross-regional labor import. But the extreme transiency of much of modern international migration makes it ideal in freeing employers from local constraints.

Work careers today close with retirement, sharp or gradual. As noted earlier, workers of prior cohorts more likely left the labor force through death.<sup>32</sup> Retirement as a concept emerged in the 1930s, for which it was one basic strategy to reduce mass unemployment (along with part-time work and shortening the workweek). Pension-supported retirement had the triple advantage of reducing unemployment, increasing overall worker productivity (it was believed older workers were inefficient), and increasing aggregate demand by putting money into hands that would spend it. The 1950s saw the institutionalization of retirement in its modern American form and a rapid expansion of the benefits and coverage of Social Security. Welcomed by big business as an investment tool (Graebner 1980, 215ff.—funding pools that backed pensions were investment capital accounts for firms), private defined-benefit pension plans spread from 15 percent of the labor force to over 40 percent by 1960. The mass leisure sector ballooned. All this meant that retirement emerged in its modern cultural form (Grabener 1980, chap. 8), and cohorts retiring in the glory years enjoyed opportunities unimagined in their youth.

With the neoliberal transition of the 1970s, things changed. Although mandatory retirement was struck down for various reasons, the decline in the LFPR of older workers continued, driven by pension policies almost as effective as mandatory retirement itself. By the mid-1990s, however, long-term trends began to stall and reverse (Purcell 2000); pension coverage fell for men and women 55–64 and 65 and over, labor force participation rates began to climb for all age brackets over 55, and proportions of pensioners and of Social Security recipients working began to climb. After 1994, there even emerged a small move back toward full-time work among the elderly. Some of this may have reflected a hot economy, but some may also have reflected the changing provisions of Social Security and a stalling of income in the senior age brackets.<sup>33</sup>



From an encoding point of view, the importance of retirement lies in its guaranteeing the youth of the labor force. It stops the endless march of salaries in terms of age and employer seniority. It eradicates old distributions of education, training, and occupation. Since the employees it eliminates are generally long-tenure employees (who have preferential access to it in an age of early retirement offers) it also has a large effect on organizational memory, for good or ill. (For example, there are only a hundred or so people left in the United States with the skills to maintain the electronic switches that still handle most of the nation's long-distance phone calls.) Note that often what retirement eradicates are events long past. To take an occupational example, the baby boom drew thousands of extra people into teaching with the result that teaching (elementary and secondary especially) is today an elderly profession, from which about one-quarter of its members will disappear in the next eight years. Not only will this create an enormous present crisis, it will also induct another oversized cohort to produce another such crisis 30 years hence.

#### OCCUPATIONS, PROFESSIONS, AND THE ORGANIZATION OF WORK

The varying depths of life course experience at any given time, encoded into cohorts and cohort segments presently extant in the labor force, constitute the materials on which occupations are built. By "occupations" here, I mean real social things. When the census assigns people occupations, it merely locates them in a category of workers. In such an exercise occupations are just areas of tasks in a division of labor. They are not social entities with coherence and consequence.

Occupations have two other realities. Implicit in my argument so far is the first of these—the idea that occupations are particular and enduring groups of people. The various food service groups mentioned a few pages ago are not in this sense occupations. They are simply categories of work through which young people flow at a tremendous rate—what we might call "turnover occupations." So a second conception of occupations involves sustained membership by particular individuals. Yet a third way of conceiving occupations is through their institutions—associations, unions, friendly societies, licensing boards, and so on.

Research areas are sharply differentiated by their choice among these different concepts of occupa-

tion. For most quantitative analysis, occupation means the (current) task, given by the SOC (Standard Occupational Classification) codes and the triple-digit census classification. Such analysis makes strong assumptions, especially about change in the occupational system over time. The new labor history, by contrast, has begun with occupations as institutions (unions, family and employment structures, repertoires of contention), although often also amassing data on occupations as groups of people at a given moment. The professions literature—which has much more detailed individual data than does the new labor history with its working-class focus—has generally insisted on all three aspects of occupations combined, disdaining those occupations unable to connect an enduring group of people, a set of institutions, and a task area.<sup>34</sup>

Any serious study of occupations must begin with the question of how and when these three strands of occupation-ness can be brought together. More important, it must also understand how lineages—consistent social structures through time—can be created within each strand. How can or does a task area remain unified across time? How does a group of people maintain a position in the division of labor as they and the institutions around them age? How do occupational structures grow, develop, and die?

With respect to these questions, we know, first, a good deal about the history and current structure of task areas. For the professions we have many detailed case summaries and the general theoretical analysis of Abbott (1988). For occupations more generally we have the large literature of the new labor history and a distinguished theoretical literature on labor process. From the same sources, we know, second, much about the organizational structures of occupations themselves, particularly about unionized occupations and the professions. This was the heart of the sociology of work as it descended from Everett Hughes and has been many times reviewed. Most work about occupations is in fact about the organized structures of occupations and the actions undertaken by those structures and by current occupation members.<sup>35</sup>

But we know, third, next to nothing about the historical demography of occupations. Even for the well-studied professions few works track individuals through careers in any substantial numbers; virtually all studies of professions, as of internal labor markets, break careers into transitions and analyze the transitions separately. And even where they exist, little can be inferred from tenure distri-

butions, which are largely determined by fluctuations in occupational entry.<sup>36</sup> The simple fact is that we do not know the number and extent of demographically coherent occupations today or for any era of the past since the rise of industrialization.<sup>37</sup>

If any occupations are full social entities—task, people, and organization—it is the professions and crafts. I focus here on the professions, which are larger, more powerful, and growing; the crafts are in demographic decline. A long-standing literature (e.g., Ben-David 1963) has seen the professions as a risk-averse upper-middle-class strategy for class reproduction. Current patterns of occupational choice among elite university graduates underscore this importance, also evident in the political attitudes of professionals, which are liberal on social questions and conservative on economic ones (Brint 1994).

Demographically, members of the professions remain in them longer than do members of other occupations. In part, this is because professional skills have high costs, both sunk (income forgone during training) and ongoing (debt incurred for training), and as a result individuals are reluctant to leave. At the same time, the professions have expanded considerably as a proportion of the labor force in the last century, much of that expansion coming in teaching and nursing, mass professions that together constitute nearly a third of the professional-technical sector, itself now nearly 20 percent of the labor force.

Ambitious young people choose their professions based on current educational availability (a function of professional and state policy) and current rewards (a function of the current balance of supply and demand). But this current balance of supply and demand is a function of many things. First, because of the length of professional training, demographic decisions long past are encoded into the current professional age structure, with crucial consequences for later supply. Second, the professions themselves can constrain (e.g., British lawyers) or facilitate (e.g., American lawyers) production of new professionals. The professions also generate new technologies and organizations of work that may dramatically affect professional productivity and hence demand. The state too shapes supply and demand, particularly through control of professional education, a force that of course varies with the centralization and power of the state (high in France, low in Italy, for example). State power can also have dramatic effects on professional autonomy. And for those professions—like engineering—dependent directly on commercial employ-

ment, the private sector can play important roles, partly in education, but more crucially in the size of demand and extent of autonomy.

The almost inevitable result of these various forces is a boom-and-bust cycle, which can be clearly seen in Krause's survey (1996) of four professions in five countries. Since these cycles are short relative to the professional life course, long-tenure professionals can assume that their profession's rewards and conditions of employment will change one or more times over their work lifetimes. The professions thus provide a particularly clear example of the kind of cohort-encoded labor force discussed earlier.

Organizationally, more and more American professionals have become salaried over the last 30 to 50 years. (We do not actually know how long this trend has gone on.) Moreover, the organizations in which such salaried professionals work have gotten larger and more heteronomous. And a variety of sources note the increase in new forms of accountability (on all these, see Leicht and Fennell 1997). Although the roots of these developments lie in the middle twentieth century or even earlier, the last 20 years have seen a rapid increase in them, paralleling an increasing involvement of the state and commercial sector in professional life. Overall, these changes are making American professionals more like continental ones, who have come from the beginning most often been employees or functionaries.<sup>38</sup>

These transformations can stand for larger transformations in the labor process throughout the labor force, since if any set of occupations can dominate their work practices, it is the professions. Transformations in the professions make a useful transition into some brief closing comments about the organization of work.

There is no space here for a serious discussion of the set of forces commonly believed to determine the division of labor on the shop floor, in the cubicle, or at the counter. The questions of work redesign, of flexibility, of worker democracy, and of the labor process more generally command independent space of their own. One important aim of this chapter, however, has been to raise the possibility that this entire literature on work organization needs to more deeply consider the labor opportunity structure as a determinant of the organization of production.<sup>39</sup>

We can see this determination by considering the topic of skill. The subjects of skill and technique have exercised the sociology of work from its earliest days, much of this work growing out of the satisfaction literature produced by industrial en-

gineering. The 1950s saw a large literature on deskilling and automation, above all in France (Friedmann 1946; Touraine 1955; Naville 1963), where a mixed view was taken of the move to automated production. The downside of repetitive work and of deskilling was noticed, but automation was also thought to raise levels of skill and to create new relations between workers as processes became more complex and interdependent. (Similar views were urged in the United States by Blauner 1964.) The 1970s brought Braverman (1974), Burawoy (1979), and the anglophone deskilling controversy.

In these various deskilling debates (Attewell 1990 gives an excellent summary), however, the concept of skill was never treated in life course terms, but only cross-sectionally. Writers who talked of reskilling pointed to training programs and one-step transitions. But just as the concept of career was operationalized not in actual career data but in point-outcome measures, transitions, and hazard rates, no one actually has any idea how many skills a typical worker has had in a lifetime, now or for any point in the past (for ethnographic work on skills over the career, see Harper 1987, 2001).

Moreover, the present-day skill distribution is a crucial aspect of the labor opportunity structure, as we have already seen in the earlier discussion of education. But this encoded skill distribution has further structural implications. Consider the phenomenon of the occupational sorting of talent. Suppose there are some generalizable individual resources that are convertible into many different particular occupational skills. (They can be genetic or acquired—what matters is that they be generalized.) These are things like intelligence, “people skills,” manual facility, and so on. Suppose also that occupations follow some kind of prestige and reward hierarchy. A simple argument predicts that workers will take their skills where they will be best rewarded. This implies that in a labor force closed to immigration, a randomly examined occupation will contain a “representative” sample of skill resources only if there are constraints that lock into particular occupations or occupational zones groups (typically, ascriptive groups) that themselves contain representative samples of skills. If all individuals are free to choose their occupations, occupations low in prestige and rewards will be systematically denuded of people with generalizable skills, since these workers will move elsewhere to get returns to their resources.

The obvious example is women, an ascriptive group within which generalizable skills take rough-

ly the same distribution as they do among men. During the early years of the move of married women into the labor force, job discrimination kept women out of much of the high-rewarded labor force. As a result, the glory years labor force was full of extremely smart and well-educated secretaries, a group that largely disappeared from the labor force once the great affirmative action settlements of the 1970s made it much easier for such women to become lawyers, executives, and doctors. Could it be that one of the reasons the personal computer took off in business and professional life, indeed one of the reasons that professional workers began spending their highly paid time doing most of (what would have been seen in the 1950s as) their own secretarial work, was that there was no longer any pool of talent to do that work at the necessary quality for the wages offered? There were some personal efficiency and technological reasons for this shift, to be sure, but the necessary cause of the sheer absence of potential clerical workers of prior skill levels undoubtedly played a major role in this as in many other aspects of the reorganization of office life.

Labor force-wide, this is undoubtedly a strong effect. The opening of barriers to employment frees individuals to move their talents where they wish, with the curious result that inequality between occupations in terms of individual endowments increases; variance within becomes variance between. More generally, we can posit a kind of Say's law for occupations: at any given time, the existing division of labor can employ only those individuals who exist in the labor force at that moment. Those individuals possess a certain mix of historically encoded attributes and assets—age, skills, gender, education, wealth, and so on—on the basis of which the existing division of labor gets filled. Note that this fact places absolute constraints on the algebraic relationships between certain variables—on returns to education, for example.

This implies further that the overall parameters of the current mapping of individuals into positions are not a function of matters at the margin, as is implicit in the neoclassical way of thinking about sorting. Relations at the margin determine only instantaneous, local change. The overall nature of the occupational mapping is a function of the averages, (the marginals) which are, for the most part, deeply encoded into the demographic (broadly understood) structure of the labor force. Note that we take this argument for granted in studies of immigrant and imported labor, which we routinely explain in terms of demand for labor-

ers of types unavailable in the current offer of the labor force. Commercial organizations unable to find what they want in the current labor force have powerful incentives to look beyond it—either geographically or socially or both.

With these few hints of the implications of a labor opportunity structure for understanding the organizational world of work I must close. I hope to have persuaded the reader that the sociology of work can be renovated by rethinking our normal strategies of analysis, which are overly reliant on a historical-forces, effects-at-the-margin, individual-outcomes model. Even the life course model, important as that is (or should be) for the sociology of work, does not go far enough. Only a general analysis of historically encoded structures—which after all include not only labor, but also technology, employment relations, occupations, firms, and so on—can really enable us to escape the ways our earlier analyses have precommitted us to certain conclusions.

The sociology of work is an old and distinguished subfield, both in the United States and in Europe. In both places it has had strong periods and weak ones. In both places it has, like the sociology of organizations in a parallel case, flirted at times with becoming a kind of applied personnel studies for the commercial world. But its inner heritage is the radical and critical question of how exactly work is situated in human experience. The problems of the sociology of work thus present a forceful challenge to the enterprise of economic sociology. In the first instance, the question of the boundaries of work requires economic sociology to start thinking about the various “noneconomic” sectors of work and about their interrelations with wage work. In the second, economic sociology has in the concept of a labor opportunity structure a way of going beyond the structural and network/embedding insights that have been its bread and butter heretofore. A historical demography of wage labor is a preliminary to any serious account of the economy. As of the present moment, we have not even begun it.

## NOTES

I would like to thank Erin York for research assistance.

1. The figures on types of work are from the *Statistical Abstract of the United States*, the 2000 issue, table 438 on p. 265 and table 637 on p. 396. All data from the *Statistical Abstract* in this chapter come from this issue, and are in the form “SA:pages” for brevity. Hence, in this case, SA:265, 367.

2. Other than this brief mention, I have omitted consideration of the various types of forced production. For an example, see Hirata 1979.

3. Polanyi's definition of market production was that it was nonembedded production. The fascination with embeddedness in economic sociology is thus a fractal return of Polanyi's view, studying embeddedness, but only within the (relatively) disembedded sector of wage production. See Abbott 2001, chap. 1.

4. Sex is another example, prostitution having seen a large decline over the past century as the young single men who were its main clientele have found free sex more available. Still another is elevator operators, of whom there were 100,000 as recently as 1950. (The Bureau of Labor Statistics reports 2,700 in 1998.) The 1950 figure is from the *Historical Statistics of the United States*, Bicentennial Edition (Washington, D.C.: GPO, 1975), 144. All subsequent citations from the *Historical Statistics* are in the form HS:page, in this case, HS:144. On family work systems, see also the chapter of Light in this volume.

5. The best conceptual overview of leisure and work remains de Grazia 1964. On consumption, see the chapter of Zelizer in this volume. The Keynes quote is Keynes [1931] 1963, 367. For want of space, I have removed here a discussion on the culture of work.

6. For the work discipline literature, see Edwards 1979. On informal relations in formal organizations, see Roethlisberger and Dickson 1939 or any other classic of the human relations school. Examples of resistance and organization against plant change include Fantasia 1988; Jermier, Knights, and Nord 1994; and Burawoy and Lukacs 1992. Also interesting in this regard is Leidner 1993.

7. For an excellent review taking this individual approach, see Mishel, Bernstein, and Schmitt 1999. James Coleman defended sociological hyperindividualization by arguing that society had become individualized and that our sociology should be apposite for its time (Coleman 1993). This argument puts the ideological cart before the empirical horse; by taking this hyperindividualized stand, social science participated in furthering the ideology of individualism. But as usual Coleman saw the issue quite clearly.

8. For language examples, see Hareven 1982; Siu 1987; and Lamphere, Stepick, and Grenier 1994. In dozens of current situations worldwide, ignorance of the local language is a crucial element of forced labor structures.

9. Granovetter and Tilly 1988; Tilly and Tilly 1994, 1998. I have not tried in this chapter to update Tilly and Tilly's chapter from the preceding edition of this handbook. I recommend it (and the book that followed) highly.

10. The “encoding” perspective adopted here differs from a life course perspective. Life course perspectives consider individual outcomes unfolding over an individual's life; social forces matter insofar as they affect this unfolding. The dependent variable is usually some general “outcome” in personal experience, important in its own right. In the status attainment and human capital perspectives, outcomes are always located at a point in time because the ultimate interest of these perspectives is deciding policy, which works at a point. In the present view, by contrast, the life course itself matters mainly because at any given time it determines important individual “asset” outcomes (things that pile up over time, positive and negative), which, along with other social states, constitute the determining forces of the present. The outcome of interest is the unfolding of the social system of work, not of individual lives, which are important only because they affect that system. And the conceptions of

causality and outcome are processual, not point-focused. On outcome concepts generally, see Abbott, forthcoming. An interesting collection of papers on work and the life course is Marshall et al. 2001.

11. The logic of how all these are tied together may make certain of them appear to be "larger," and it may be that that logic does allow some of them to govern others. But those facts should be taken as empirical possibilities, not a priori assumptions.

12. These figures give the total number of owner-occupied housing units divided by the total number of households. HS:43, 646; SA:718.

13. The percentage of Americans over 20 that are foreign born is back over 10 percent for the first time since 1950; the low came at about 6 percent around 1970 (HS:14ff.; SA:47). The average age of men in the labor force was 33 in 1900 and rose steadily till 1970 (39.9) before dipping because of the baby boom. It is currently (1999) back up to 39. Women in the labor force used to be considerably younger than men. Like the male mean, the female figure fell to 1980 (34) and has risen since (to 39). The data for the age-specific LFPRs (here and in table 1) from 1970 on are from SA:405. For 1890–1940, Sixteenth Census, Population, vol. 3, pt. 1, p. 26. For 1950, Seventeenth Census, vol. 4, Special Reports, Pt. 1B, p. 37. For 1960, Eighteenth Census, vol. 2, PC(2)6A, table 2.

14. The exact details of these series vary, but the general trends are clear. I have relied here on HS:225–26, 297, 301; SA:466. In commenting on this paper, John Muellbauer pointed out that a change in the mix of types of families may be an important factor here.

15. For home ownership figures, see HS:43, 643, 646, 713. The real bonanza came for those holding mortgages through the huge inflations of the neoliberal transition. The real value of a fixed mortgage payment fell 45 percent from 1975 to 1985 and almost 70 percent from 1965 to 1985. The slow rise of overall homeownership since 1970 conceals steady declines in age-specific home ownership rates; the rise is compositional (Myers 1999).

16. Most satisfaction studies are psychological; see, e.g., Cranny, Smith, and Stone 1992. For a more sociological example, see Freeman and Rogers 1999. Most sociological work on satisfaction assumes *ex ante* that satisfaction is a downstream, short-run variable, with no autoregression or other long-run pattern or cumulation. See the classic Parnes et al., 1970–75, 1:150ff.

17. Sources on work time include Hunnicutt 1988, 1996; Cross 1988; Thoemmes 2000.

18. The relation between the legal and actual workweek has always been loose. The legal standard exists to benchmark things like overtime and benefits. On the recent changes in work hours, see Coleman and Pencavel 1993. I unfortunately lack the space to discuss flextime and home work.

19. The scattered data on whole careers from the 1930s to the 1950s are discussed in Wilensky 1960, 553 n. 2. The whole careers tradition ended with the turns first to structural modeling of current achievement (in the 1960s) and second to hazard rate study of particular shifts (in the 1980s). The major longitudinal studies (PSID, NLS) began to produce career results in the 1980s and 1990s, but have both coverage and completion problems. Methodologically, the most likely technique for whole career data is sequence analysis (Abbott and Tsay 2000). The best general review of career studies is Rosenfeld 1992.

20. These education figures are all directly from HS:380;

SA 152, 157. I have throughout this discussion assumed that education in labor force cohorts is the same as education in adult population cohorts.

21. On drug dealing, see MacCoun and Reuter 1992 and, especially, Hagedorn 2002, who estimates that 10 percent of youth in his research areas are involved in drug sales. MacCoun and Reuter were surprised to find that most of drug workers in their sample also had legitimate employment.

22. There is little evidence that higher education produces much of a net increase in cognitive functioning once we control out selection effects; most college learning is actually maturation. The idea that increasing education means ipso facto a more highly skilled labor force is thus an egregious error. See Pascarella and Terenzini 1991 for the best general review of this topic.

23. A quick calculation based on LFPRs and Carey's figures shows that these four occupations produce about one-half of the 10 million person-years of work done by a one-year cohort as it passes through the ages from 17 to 22. Note that unlike the American labor force, the German labor force has by this age had much of its future occupational structure encoded into it through apprenticeships connected quite tightly to later occupations and employers (see the essays in Culpepper and Finegold 1999).

24. These are estimated figures, using total numbers of veterans, assuming 95 percent of them are men and that their LFPRs are the same as their age peers. A slight deflation is probably necessary for full disability status. Note also that a surprising amount of military vocational training was used later in the civilian labor force. See Parnes et al. 1970–75, 4:43–44.

25. Like many civilian organizations, the military itself has changed in the neoliberal age into a leaner, meaner, team-based organization from which much of the old "shit-work" and stultifying bureaucracy have been outsourced. See Abbott 2002 and the sources cited therein.

26. Ten-year-plus employees still make up about 60 percent of employed men in their fifties (Jaeger and Stevens 2000). Useful references on job tenure include Akerlof and Main 1981 and Gregg and Wadsworth 1999 (on Britain, where job tenure became a major political issue in the 1990s). Interestingly, tenure distributions do not vary widely between blacks and whites (Hall 1982).

27. Hall (1982) estimates cumulative jobs over a lifetime to be about 10 for both men and women, extrapolating from data for 1968–78. High youth turnover was a truism of the early small-sample mobility literature, e.g., Davidson and Anderson 1937 and Form and Miller 1949.

28. For rewarding accounts, see Wyckoff 1898 and the unshakably classic Anderson 1923. Anderson 1940 chronicles the replacement of hoboes by temporary migrant workers in the depression.

29. Basic sources on part-time, contingent, and alternate employment are Tilly 1996; Smith 1997; Kalleberg 2000; and Carre et al. 2000.

30. The result of this (re)entry is, in most cases, that wages, benefits, working conditions, and other job qualities are lower for those in these various flexible arrangements. Much of the literature concerns whether non-FTEY work has been chosen or forced (qv. Tilly 1996), with the verdict inclining to forced, at least since 1980. The same trends have been noted in France (Paugam 2000, 76ff.). Nonetheless, the invariant and very long duration (since 1900) cross-sectional association between rates of part-time, temporary, AEA, or contingent work on the one hand and gender, young people, and so on on the other suggests that a sub-

tantial sector of the economy operates on a male-breadwinner model consciously or unconsciously or perforce.

31. On the bracero program see Goldfarb 1981, 115ff. The census calculation is my own. The classic source on the demand theory of immigration is Piore 1979. On migratory workers see, e.g., Lamphere, Stepick, and Grenier 1994 and Waldinger 1986, 1996. A general review on reasons for mobility in the glory years is Roseman 1983. For a recent econometric study (with proxies rather than actual survey responses), see Chun 1996. To save space, I have removed a section on migration in Europe.

32. For general histories of retirement in the United States, see Costa 1998 and Graebner 1980. Workers could not expect ultimately to leave the labor force by retirement rather than death until well after 1950. Calculations based on Hauser's labor force life tables (1954, 39) put the ratio of deaths to retirements at 1.3 deaths for each 1 retirement in 1947; the expected duration of retirement in 1947 was about five years. Lower death rates and earlier retirement rewrote these figures completely by the late 1970s.

33. Retirement in Europe has a slightly different history. The LFPRs of Britain, France, and Germany at age 65 have typically been from five to 20 percentage points below those in the United States in all decades since 1900 (Costa 1998, 9), probably because European nations typically adopted national pension plans two to five decades before the United States.

34. On census-type occupational classifications and their problems see Conk 1980 and Desrosières and Thévenot 1988. Examples of the new labor history are Walkowitz 1978 and Licht 1983, which exemplify its excellent prosopography. An exemplarily detailed history of a profession is Hufbauer 1982.

35. Weeden (2003) has recently shown that strategies of occupational closure make strong predictions of wage rewards, providing a serious complement to individual-level human-capital or skill accounts. But while occupational closure may have important effects, we do not in fact really know in most cases whether there is anything demographically real there to be closed. And, in the case of many unions, the closure strategies are not occupational but sectoral; Germany's great union coalitions, for example, have been industry-based. A perusal of the journals shows surprisingly little work on the structural and organizational realities of occupations in the last five years, with continuing emphasis on inequalities and on changes in the organization of work and employment. This may well be because organized or demographic occupations do not really exist, but that is an empirical proposition—as yet unevaluated for either past or present.

36. For example, extremely high tenures generally signify occupational death through nonrecruitment; barbers, farmers, and railroad conductors were the longest-tenure occupations in 1987. Unlike turnover occupations, which have a task but no enduring personnel and no organization, these are "workless occupations," occupations with personnel and in some cases organization, but no longer much of any task.

37. What occupational demography we do have (largely of unions and professions) concerns organizational leadership. For fine-grained studies of careers within structures, see the chapters of Abbott, Gaertner, Rosenbaum, and Althaus and Kalleberg in Breiger 1990, as well as Stewman 1986, which reviews some of the mathematical demography of organizations. Evans and Laumann (1983) estimated occupational retention in the professions, but their methods used age-specific, not tenure-specific decrement rates, and

so are probably untrustworthy. Rotolo and McPherson (2001) analyze occupations competing in a demographic space for members, but for them occupation members have no historical continuity. Interestingly enough, we have the same ignorance about unions; there is almost no information on turnover and tenure among rank-and-file union members.

38. For a still-relevant analysis of the future of professions and of institutionalized expertise in general, see Abbott 1991.

39. A good way into this literature is through the sources given in note 9 above. As I noted earlier, I have not summarized it here because it is well summarized elsewhere. It seemed more important to step back and view studies of work through another lens.

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## 15 Culture and Consumption

Viviana Zelizer

STRANGE as it may now seem, during the 1960s many American planners argued that shopping malls could provide solutions to suburban sprawl and urban anomie. Designer and developer Victor Gruen led the chorus, building some of the country's largest and best-publicized suburban shopping centers. Moreover, he wrote eloquently about their virtues. Speaking especially of the Northland and Eastland centers his company built in the Detroit metropolitan area, Gruen crowed that they had created a new, intense kind of community:

I remember the surprised faces of my clients when we drove out to a shopping center on a Sunday and found the parking area full. The courts and malls, the lanes and promenades were filled with milling crowds dressed in their Sunday best, engaging in an activity that was believed to be long forgotten: family groups strolling leisurely, their youngsters in go-carts and dogs on the leash; relaxed and admiring the flowers and trees, sculptures and murals, fountains and ponds, and, incidentally, using the opportunity for window-shopping. To the joy of the merchants, this last resulted in strong business activity on the following weekdays. (1964, 203)

Gruen went on to boast that civic organizations, churches, hobby clubs, political rallies, art exhibitions, and theaters thrived in the new environment, even that "National minority groups arranged for special musical and folk dancing evenings" (1964, 203). Good planning, he concluded, could integrate retail activity with active social life.

A third of a century down the suburban road, political scientist turned prophet Robert Putnam offered a grimmer judgment of the shopping mall. "Rather than at the grocery store or five-and-dime on Main Street, where faces were familiar," lamented Putnam,

today's suburbanites shop in large, impersonal malls. Although malls constitute America's most distinctive contemporary public space, they are carefully designed for one primary, private purpose—to direct

consumers to buy. Despite the aspirations of some developers, mall culture is not about overcoming isolation and connecting with others, but about privately surfing from store to store—in the presence of others, but not in their company. The suburban shopping experience does not consist of interaction with people embedded in a common social network. (2000, 211)

The very innovations that Gruen thought were renewing lost community, according to Putnam, actually destroyed it. Increasingly, consumption privatized and isolated Americans instead of providing occasions and means of sociability.

In a sophisticated and closely documented account, Lizabeth Cohen (2003) reports what actually went on within America's transformed consumer marketplaces. Shopping centers did offer their customers a whole range of community activities, including charity fairs, Weight Watchers meetings, and concerts. Moreover, looked at closely, shopping turns out to have often been a joint family activity; women, who were the principal shoppers, frequently took their children and their husbands along with them. Spurred by anxious merchants, however, shopping malls became much more exclusive than city streets. Legal restrictions limited the range of political activities permitted and the kinds of people who could enter the malls. Finally, the malls catered to strongly segmented populations.

When developers and store owners set out to make the shopping center a more perfect downtown, they aimed to exclude from this public space unwanted urban groups such as vagrants, prostitutes, racial minorities, and poor people. Market segmentation became the guiding principle of this mix of commercial and civic activity, as the shopping center sought perhaps contradictorily to legitimize itself as a true community center and to define that community in exclusionary socioeconomic and racial terms. (Cohen 1996, 1059)

Neither all-embracing communities nor habitats of the Lonely Crowd, shopping centers represent-