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Social Mobility Across Three Generations

This article examines differences in patterns of social mobility experienced by three generations (grandparents, parents, and children) within the same family lineages. Using data from the Longitudinal Study of Generations, we found that each successive generation of offspring has had higher occupational attainment than the one before. However, the rate of upward mobility has slowed across generations. Moreover, the association between parents' socioeconomic stratum and children's socioeconomic stratum has weakened across the generations in our sample (independent of structural shifts in the distributions of occupations), suggesting a decline in the family transmission of social position to offspring. Finally, in terms of female social mobility, the level of broad occupational segregation faced by every successive generation of women remained constant.

The transmission of values, status, and behaviors from one generation to the next has been a central concern to family sociologists over the past half century, in part because it sheds light on the family's role in reproducing or modifying the social structure through the socialization of children. One dimension of the debate over "American family decline" (Popenoe, 1993) is how social changes in the 20th century have affected family transmission of socioeconomic and cultural resources.

By tracking members of subsequent generations down family lineages, Bengtson (1975) compared the level of transmission of values (or the "generation gap") between two intergenerational dyads: parents (generation 1 or G1s) and their children (G2s) who came of age in the 1940s and 1950s and parents (G2s) and their children (G3s) who came of age in the 1960s and 1970s. The G3s were the grandchildren of the G1s. Thus the analysis involved three related generations rather than separate and unrelated birth cohorts. Bengtson found considerable value similarity between parents and children in both intergenerational dyads. Generation membership did not seem to condition the impact that parents' values had on children's values.

This article uses a conceptual framework similar to Bengtson's (1975) to study the intergenerational transmission of occupational stratum across three generations of family members, spanning almost the entire 20th century. Our central research question is: Does generation condition the effect of the parents' occupational position on their children's occupational position? Drawing on the implications of four 20th-century social changes—expanding universalism, a shift in childrearing values from obedience to autonomy, the growth of alternative family structures, and changing gender roles—we predict that the effect of the status of parents on their children's occupational outcomes declines with each successive generation.

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Using data from the Longitudinal Study of Generations, we compare the level of inheritance of socioeconomic strata experienced by three successive generations of offspring: grandparents (Generation 1—G1s, most born between 1896 and 1911), who inherit great grandparents' (Generation 0—G0s) socioeconomic positions; parents (Generation 2—G2s, most born between 1916 and 1931), who inherit G1s' socioeconomic positions; and adult children (Generation 3—G3s, most born between 1945 and 1955), who inherit G2s' socioeconomic positions. We assess how the experience of socioeconomic inheritance and social mobility for each generation of offspring differs from its parent generation's experience of socioeconomic inheritance and social mobility. For the analysis, we fit log-linear models of association to contingency tables, stratified by each generation's occupation at a particular stage in the life course and by gender.

Social Mobility Across Intergenerational Dyads

Mechanisms that give rise to the intergenerational inheritance of socioeconomic position include parental transmission of economic resources, parental transmission of cultural resources, role modeling, and discrimination (Biblarz & Raftery, 1993; Kalmijn, 1994). Parents' occupational positions covary with the amount of economic resources they have to invest in their children, and children's occupational destinations, in turn, covary with the amount of investment parents have made in their children's human capital (Becker, 1964; Becker & Tomes, 1986). The direct intergenerational transmission of property (such as farms and small businesses) can also lead to occupational inheritance (Elder, Rudkin, & Conger, 1995).

When raising their children, parents transmit values about what "makes up 'earning a living'" (Hout, 1984, p. 1,384; also Biblarz, 1992; Kohn, 1977). Through role modeling, children may adopt these orientations for themselves. Kohn's work (Kohn, 1969, 1977; Kohn & Slomczynski, 1990) demonstrates links between parents' occupational conditions (substantive complexity, autonomy, routinization) and the importance parents place on conformity to external authority and, in turn, children's value orientations and children's occupational positions. Parents tend to expect that their children, as adults, will be faced with life conditions similar to what they faced (Kerckhoff, 1976), and parents value traits in their children that will facilitate their children's adaptation to the kinds of life conditions and, in particular, occupational conditions faced by parents (e.g., Kohn, 1977).

Discrimination in social contexts outside the family can also produce socioeconomic inheritance. If children from low socioeconomic strata are not given the same opportunities to succeed (in school, for example) as children from high socioeconomic strata because they wear markers such as dress and social mannerisms that betray their class (Bourdieu, 1977; Eder, 1982; Lareau, 1989), other institutions can increase the likelihood that children will end up in the same socioeconomic stratum as their parents (Bowles & Gintis, 1976).

Two processes of social change during the past century may have weakened the intergenerational reproduction mechanisms discussed above. First, the occupational opportunity structure of American society has become more open or universalistic, particularly from 1960 to the present (Featherman & Hauser, 1978; Hout, 1984, 1988). Mobility research prior to 1970 indicated that while changes in the occupational structure produced intergenerational social mobility, most of it upward, there had been "no appreciable tightening or loosening of the regime connecting the occupations of men with those of their fathers" (Hauser & Featherman, 1977, p. 84; see also Blau & Duncan, 1967; Duncan, 1968; Rogoff, 1953a, 1953b). Opportunities expanded in the sense that more nonmanual jobs became available, but equality of opportunity did not increase because the effect of family background on occupational attainment remained constant.

Analyses of the *1973 Occupational Changes in a Generation Survey* modified this picture. Featherman and Hauser (1978, p. 136) reported a modest but "long-term and continuing" decline in the "obstacles to occupational change" among American men, suggesting greater equality of opportunity in social institutions—or more selection based on achievement rather than on the markers of social class. The decline in the association between socioeconomic origin and socioeconomic destination became particularly evident between 1960 and 1970, and greater yet from 1970 onward (DiPrete & Grusky, 1990; Featherman & Hauser, 1978; Grusky & DiPrete, 1990; Hout, 1984, 1988).

This shift from ascription to achievement should be manifested in a weakening in the association between occupational origins and destinations across successive intergenerational dyads.

Relative to the earlier generations, the youngest generation we analyze (the grandchildren—G3s, most born between 1945 and 1955), in particular, should be less likely to experience social class inheritance because the greatest proportion of them came of age and went to work in a period that was distinctly more open than earlier periods.

The second trend is observed at the family level. Parental values and socialization practices have also changed. Data suggest a general shift in values away from an emphasis on obedience in children and toward an emphasis on autonomy and independence in children (Alwin, 1984, 1986, 1988, 1990). Parental authoritarian control over children has declined as a value and in practice (Bronfenbrenner, 1958). At the same time, divorce and changes in family structure (e.g., stepfamilies and families headed by women) have increased (Bumpass, 1990; National Center for Health Statistics, 1991). The divorce rate increased gradually from the turn of the century until about 1960 (with a single, sharp, short-term rise in the 1940s due to World War II), and then more than doubled from 1960 to 1980 (DaVanzo & Rahman, 1993)—a period when most of the G3 grandchildren in our sample were growing up. Elder and his associates have noted in their sample of Iowa farm families that children's experiences of their parents' marital discord and particular kinds of parenting practices make children's mobility out of farming more likely (Elder, Robertson, & Conger, 1993; Elder, Rudkin, & Conger, 1995).

These changes in family values, childrearing practices, and family structure may have led to a weakening of the family's determination of children's aspirations and behavior and a potential freeing of children from their origins (Biblarz & Raftery, 1993, p. 99). This is compatible with classic ideas about the functions that the institution of the family has lost in modern times (Ogburn & Nimkoff, 1955; Parsons & Bales, 1955). Clark and Lipset (1991, p. 407) argue that "the slimmer family determines less the education and jobs of individual family members" and that, over time, family background (or social class) wanes as a primary determinant of occupation.

Social changes in the opportunity structure of society and in the culture and structure of the family may have led to a weakening of the micro- (intrafamily) and macro- (extrafamily) level forces that contribute to socioeconomic inheritance. If so, their effects should be reflected empirically in the mobility history of successive generations within particular families. At a given stage in the life course, the occupations of the grandparent generation (G1) should strongly resemble their occupational origins—the occupations of their parents (the G0s) when they (the G1s) were growing up. When the G1s' offspring, the G2s, enter a similar stage in their life course, the G2s' occupations should less closely resemble their occupational origins (the G1s' occupations when the G2s were growing up), relative to the size of the G0-G1 association. And for the youngest generation, the G2-G3 association should be weaker yet. The degree of departure from occupational transmission may be particularly strong for the G3s. This reasoning leads to the first hypothesis:

> Hypothesis 1: Occupational inheritance will be greatest between G0s and G1s, weaker between G1s and G2s, and weakest between G2s and G3s.

Adult children's occupational destinations will be different from their parents' occupations in part because of larger changes in the occupational structure—referred to as *structural* or *forced mobility* (Featherman & Hauser, 1978; Sobel, 1983). For example, farming has declined substantially during the 20th century, and the proportions of professional, technical, administrative, and clerical workers and salaried managers have increased (Featherman & Hauser, 1978). Successive generations may be forced out of (or into) certain kinds of occupations because of the changes in the distribution of occupations in society. Elder, Rudkin, and Conger (1995) found that 33% of the adult sons of Iowa farmers were forced out of farming in the 1980s because of changes in the economy.

This kind of mobility is distinct from *relative* or *circulation mobility*, which refers to the relative advantages or disadvantages of being born into high or low socioeconomic strata for socioeconomic inheritance (the reproduction of inequality) and social mobility. General structural shifts in the occupational distribution away from agriculture and certain manual/production occupations, and the opening up of lower-level and upper-level nonmanual occupations (Blau & Duncan, 1967; Featherman & Hauser, 1978) lead to our second hypothesis:

> Hypothesis 2: Holding constant socioeconomic origins, each successive generation will have higher occupational attainments (i.e., will be more upwardly mobile) than each previous generation.

Gender, Generation, and Social Mobility

Women are disproportionately represented in clerical, service, and low-prestige retail sales occupations, and underrepresented in managerial and production (craftsmen, operatives, laborers) occupations (Roos, 1985; Treiman & Roos, 1983). These differences in the occupational distributions of men and women are not due to gender-based differences in human capital (England, 1984; Marini, 1989), nor to differences in the characteristics of female-typed and male-typed jobs that are relevant to job-family conflict issues (Glass & Camarigg, 1992). Rather, they are most likely due to gender-based discrimination—employment practices and preferences that sort and select incumbents to occupations based on gender (Baron & Bielby, 1985). These practices reflect, in part, longstanding attitudes about appropriate behavior for men and women (Treiman & Roos, 1985).

While some aggregate trend data have shown stability in occupational segregation by gender over the 20th century (Gross, 1968), as well as stability over time in the earnings gap between men and women (Marini, 1989), more recent evidence (for example, Jacobs' 1989 reanalysis of historical census data) shows a slow but consistent decline in occupational segregation by gender within nonfarm occupations from 1900 through 1970. More recently, the earnings gap between men and women has narrowed as well (England, 1992). From 1970 to the present, the occupational discrimination effect against women may have declined even more substantially (DiPrete & Grusky, 1990). In some occupational categories that have historically been gender segregated (such as professionals), women have achieved roughly proportional representation (Reskin & Roos, 1990), although within the professional categories, women are disproportionately located in the lower prestige jobs (Reskin & Roos, 1990; Roos, 1985). This evidence suggests an additional hypothesis.

> Hypothesis 3: The effect of gender on destination occupational stratum will be strongest among G1s, weaker among G2s, and weakest among G3s.

Gender also may be relevant to the relationship between occupational origins and destinations. Occupational origins have traditionally been measured by asking respondents about their fathers' occupations. Male offspring may be more likely than female offspring to develop their occupational aspirations based on a male role model. Social learning theory emphasizes the prominence of same-sex role modeling in parent-child relations (Downey & Powell, 1993). While father-daughter occupational resemblance also has been observed (DiPrete & Grusky 1990; Goldthorpe, 1980; Hauser & Featherman, 1977; Hout, 1988; Rosenfeld, 1978), we expect that men will be more likely than women to inherit their fathers' occupations (following Roos, 1985), independent of the differences in the occupational distributions of men and women (from Hauser & Featherman, 1977).

Data

Data for the analysis are from the Longitudinal Study of Generations (LSG) collected since 1971. (For a comprehensive discussion of these data, see Glass, Bengtson, & Dunham, 1986.) The original sample (N = 2,044) for the 1971 wave of the LSG was drawn from 840,000 members of a Los Angeles-area health care plan (see Bengtson, 1975). Males over the age of 65 with at least one dependent and who were enrolled in the HMO were eligible for inclusion. Surveys were sent to all of their grandchildren between ages 16–26, to their parents, and to the grandparents. Overall response rate was 70%. Over 90% of the original LSG families were White. The mean age of the grandparent generation (G1) was 67; mean age for the parent generation (G2) was 44; mean age for the child generation (G3) was 20 (see Table 1). Respondents were surveyed again in 1985, 1988, 1991, and 1994.

In 1971, members of all three generations were asked: "What kind of work was your father doing when you were a teenager, about 16 years old?" (Or, "If you weren't raised by your father, what kind of work was done by the head of the household in which you were raised?") Following Roos (1985), we coded responses to the seven-category International Standard Classification of Occupations scheme (International Labour Office, 1969; also Ganzeboom, De Graaf, & Treiman, 1992; Treiman, 1977) to create our measure of occupational *origins*. (The seven categories of occupations are shown in Table 1.) We could not include mother's occupation as a measure of social origins because the variable is not available for the first generation of offspring, the G1s.

To measure occupational *destinations*, G1s and G2s were asked, "What kind of work were you doing when your children were teenagers?"

All three generations were asked about their current occupations: "If you are working now, what kind of work do you do?" To use current occupation as a basis for cross-generational comparisons is problematic because for each generation it reflects occupation at a different life-course or career stage (very late career for G1s, mid-career for G2s, very early career for G3s). Asking "What kind of work were you doing when your children were teenagers?" is preferable because it reflects the occupational destinations of each subsequent generation at a similar stage in the life course. To measure occupational destinations for G1s and G2s, we code responses to this question to the seven-category occupational classification scheme above.

At Time 1 (1971), many of the G3s were too young to have an occupation. We measure G3s' occupational destinations by taking their reported current occupation at the Time 2 (1985) wave of the study, when the G3s were between ages 30 and 40, and most of the G3s' children were 10–20 years old. In this way, we measure the occupational destinations of each subsequent generation (G1, G2, G3) when it was at the same life-course stage as the preceding generation (G0, G1, G2).

Seventy percent of the G3s eligible for inclusion in our study at Time 1 responded at Time 2. If selection effects (for example, if the subset of Time 2 G3s were from "happier" families or higher socioeconomic backgrounds than the Time 1 G3s) operated to determine the G3s who responded to the follow-up survey at Time 2, our results could be biased. They might produce a stronger association between origins and destinations among the Time 2 G3 subsample than the association that would have been observed had we been able to use the full G3 sample from Time 1.

We compared the Time 1 G3s with the subset of Time 2 G3s on a variety of background characteristics (father's occupation, father's education, mother's education, family size, etc.). There were no significant differences in the distributions of these characteristics between the two groups, with the exception of gender. The Time 2 G3s are more likely to be women than the Time 1 G3s, reflecting women's greater likelihood of responding to the follow-up survey. This association between

TABLE 1. DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS ON SELECTED CHARACTERISTICS OF THE LONGITUDINAL SURVEY OF GENERATIONS SAMPLE

	Generation			Gender		
Variable	1	2	3	Female	Male	Total
Age						
Range[a]	60–75	40–55	16–26	16–82	16–90	16–90
Mean	67	44	20	39	47	43
Born	1896–1911	1916–1931	1945–1955	1889–1955	1881–1955	1881–1955
Gender						
Percentage female	34	41	54	—	—	43
Father's occupation when respondent was a teenager (percentage):						
Professional/technical	6	7	30	16	13	14
Managerial/administrative	17	16	26	18	21	19
Clerical and related	3	6	7	6	5	5
Sales	4	7	6	6	6	6
Service	2	7	4	6	4	5
Agricultural	32	7	3	12	14	13
Production and related	36	50	25	38	38	38
Respondent's own occupation when respondent's children were teenagers (percentage):						
Professional/technical	14	27	32	22	27	25
Managerial/administrative	13	21	23	14	23	19
Clerical and related	12	21	17	34	5	17
Sales	10	7	5	7	7	7
Service	7	7	7	10	5	7
Agricultural	4	1	1	1	2	2
Production and related	41	15	15	12	31	23
N	334	457	351	490	652	1142

[a]For generations 1, 2, and 3, this age range characterizes at least 80% of the sample.

gender and generation is taken into account in the multivariate statistical analysis that follows.

Table 1 presents descriptive statistics on the main variables of interest for each generation and gender at the 1971 survey (and for G3s, some variables at Time 2 in 1985). Most G1s were aged 60–75 (born between 1896 and 1911). The occupational destinations of the G1 generation reflect the occupations they held during the years of late Depression through the 1940s. The G2s were aged 40–55 (born between 1916 and 1931). The occupational destinations of the G2 generation were the occupations they held in the late 1950s through the 1960s. The G2s are parents of members of the baby boom cohort. The G3s (aged 16–26 at Time 1) are among the baby boom cohort (born between 1945 and 1955). Their occupational destinations were the occupations they held during the middle of the Reagan years.

Occupational origins (father's occupation when respondent was a teenager) vary substantially by generation. The G1s were more likely than the G2s or G3s to come from agricultural origins (32% vs. 7% and 3%, respectively). The G2s were more likely than the G1s to come from production origins (50% vs. 36%). The G3s, in contrast, were less likely than the G1s and G2s to come from agricultural and production origins, and more likely to come from upper level nonmanual origins—professional and managerial occupations.

The percentage distributions of occupational destinations (respondent's occupation when respondent's children were teenagers) by generation suggest that each successive generation attained higher occupational levels than the one before. The greatest proportion of G1s worked in manual/production occupations (41%). Their offspring, the G2s, moved out of production (from 41% to 15%), and into lower level and upper level nonmanual occupations. In turn, the G2s' offspring, the G3s, became somewhat more concentrated than their parents in upper level nonmanual categories.

The highest rate of upward mobility was achieved by the G2 generation. The differences in the occupational distributions of G2s compared with their fathers (the G1s) are much greater than the differences between the occupational distributions of the G3s and their fathers (the G2s). Changes in the occupational structure that allow upward mobility may have slowed down across generations. One implication is that the offspring of the G3s—the G4s—may have a more difficult time than any of the three previous generations doing better than (or perhaps even as well as) their fathers, particularly because their fathers had such high achievements.

Occupational origins do not vary substantially between males and females, but occupational destinations do. Women are less likely than men to be managers (14% vs. 23%) and blue-collar, production/manual workers (12% vs. 31%). They are substantially more likely to work in clerical (34% vs. 5%) and service (10% vs. 5%) occupations. These patterns reflect the gender typing of occupations.

The distributions of occupational destinations (and origins) by gender for the LSG sample are similar to those in Roos (1985, Appendices B and C), from nationally representative General Social Survey (GSS 1974–1977) data. The main differences are that greater proportions of both sexes in the LSG sample are in higher stratum occupations relative to the general population. Among women, a greater proportion of the LSG sample is in the managerial category, and a smaller proportion is in service, relative to the GSS sample. Among men, a greater proportion of the LSG sample is in the professional and managerial categories, and a smaller proportion is in production, relative to the GSS sample. These differences may be due to the overrepresentation of non-Latino Whites in the LSG sample. Also, we measure occupational destinations at a peak, mid-career stage, whereas Roos (1985) combines occupations of early, mid-, and late life.

The Model

The differences in percentage distributions of occupational origins and destinations by generation in Table 1 reflect, in part, structural shifts in the distribution of occupations over time. They do not show whether the *effect* of the parent's occupation on the offspring's occupation varies by generation, net of structural shifts in the number of positions available. Structural shifts (differences in the marginal distributions of occupational origins and destinations) are taken into account in the log-linear analysis reported below.

For the multivariate statistical analysis, we estimate log-linear models of the association between the four variables above, cross-classified in a contingency table. The general model for the four-way table of father's occupation i (seven categories), by offspring's occupation j (seven categories), by offspring's gender k (two categories), by offspring's generation l (three categories) is:

$$\log(F_{ijkl}) = a + a_{1(i)} + a_{2(j)} + a_{3(k)} + a_{4(l)} + a_{12(ij)} + a_{14(il)} + a_{23(jk)} + a_{24(jl)} + a_{34(kl)} + a_{123(ijk)} + a_{124(ijl)} + a_{234(jkl)}$$

The model says that the expected cell frequency, F_{ijkl}, is a result of the main effect of father's occupation ($a_{1(i)}$), offspring's occupation ($a_{2(j)}$), offspring's gender ($a_{3(k)}$), and offspring's generation ($a_{4(l)}$), plus a number of two- and three-way interactions. The interaction between father's and offspring's occupation, $a_{12(ij)}$, represents the expectation of intergenerational occupational inheritance. The three-way interaction between offspring's generation, father's occupation, and own occupation, $a_{124(ijl)}$, represents Hypothesis 1—that the association between occupational origins and destinations will vary by generation and will be strongest among G1s, weaker among G2s, and weakest among G3s. The interaction between offspring's generation and occupation, $a_{24(jl)}$, represents Hypothesis 2—that each successive generation will experience higher levels of upward mobility than the previous generation. The interaction between offspring's gender and occupation, $a_{23(jk)}$, represents the expectation that women will be more likely than men to end up in female-typed occupations and less likely to end up in male-typed occupations. The three-way interaction between offspring's gender, generation, and occupation, $a_{234(jkl)}$, represents Hypothesis 3—the effect of gender on occupational destinations will be weaker for each successive generation. The three-way interaction between offspring's gender, father's occupation, and offspring's occupation, $a_{123(ijk)}$, represents the expectation that the association between occupational origins and occupational destinations will be stronger for sons than for daughters.

We had no reason to expect an association between gender and occupational origins (Roos, 1985), so $a_{13(ik)}$ was left out of the model. (In the models that we estimated, $a_{13(ik)}$ was not statistically significant.) The interaction between offspring's gender and generation, $a_{34(kl)}$, was included to account for the overrepresentation of women among the G3s. As we discuss below, an estimated version of the model in the equation best captures the main features of the four-way table.

Results

Determining the Best-Fitting Model

Table 2 presents goodness-of-fit statistics for nine models for the cross-classification of occupational origins, occupational destinations, gender, and generation. The BIC statistic (Raftery, 1986a, 1986b) is the criterion for model selection (BIC = L^2–$df(\log N)$). The lower the BIC, the better the model captures the main features of the data relative to other models.

The nine models were estimated from data that included siblings. As mentioned above, the sample design targeted a set of unrelated G1 males. They (and their spouses) were surveyed, along with all of their children (the G2s), and, in turn, all of the G2s' children, the G3s aged 16–26. Hence G3 siblings and G2 siblings are included in the original data, but not G1 siblings.

This feature of the data presents two potential problems. First, as generations vary, siblings vary; thus the effects of generation could be due to (or confounded with) the effects of siblings. Second, siblings would be expected to be more alike than unrelated individuals. This could, for example, inflate our estimates of intergenerational resemblance. From the original set of data, we created a second data set that dropped siblings and randomly selected a single offspring from each generation. Results did not change. We

Table 2. Goodness-of-Fit Statistics for Selected Models of the Association Between Occupational Origins, Occupational Destinations, Gender, and Generation: Longitudinal Survey of Generations

Model	L^2	*df*	BIC
1. [S][G][O][D]	979	278	–978
2. [S][G][O][D][SG]	954	277	–996
3. [S][G][O][D][SG][SD]	738	271	–1170
4. [S][G][O][D][SG][SD][GO]	502	267	–1378
5. [S][G][O][D][SG][SD][GO][GD]	397	264	–1462
6. [S][G][O][D][SG][SD][GO][GD][OD]	326	261	–1511
7. [S][G][O][D][SG][SD][GO][GD][OD][SOD]	318	260	–1513
8. [S][G][O][D][SG][SD][GO][GD][OD][SOD][GOD]	304	259	–1520
9. [S][G][O][D][SG][SD][GO][GD][OD][SOD][GOD][SGD]	286	248	–1460

Note: S = sex; G = generation; O = occupational origins (father's occupation); D = occupational destinations (offspring's occupation).

focus on results from the full data (with siblings) in the discussion below.

Model 1 in Table 2 is the independence model, which includes only the main effects of each variable. Models 2–9 add to Model 1, in stepwise fashion, each of the hypothesized interactions from the equation. Each of the two- and three-way interactions in the models displayed in Table 2 is more or less constrained in various ways (shown in Table 3) to find the interactions that best describe the main features of the data. The inclusion of each new interaction term from Model 2 through Model 8 leads to substantial reduction in deviance (L^2), and a better fitting model than the one before, based on BIC. The best fitting model—Model 8—includes an association between gender and occupational destinations ([SD]), generation and occupational origins ([GO]), generation and occupational destinations ([GD]), occupational origins and occupational destinations ([OD]), and two terms that represent the conditioning effect of gender and generation on the association between occupational origins and occupational destinations ([SOD] and [GOD], respectively).

Model 9 adds the three-way interaction, [SGD], to test the hypothesis that generation will condition the effect of gender on occupational destinations. Including this three-way interaction does not produce a better fitting model and does not substantially reduce the deviance (relative to degrees of freedom). Moreover, none of the parameter estimates for the [SGD] interaction was statistically significant. While Hypothesis 3 predicted that daughters from each generation would experience less occupational segregation than their mothers, results from this model show that across three generations, the segregation of women into female-typed occupational categories remained constant. Granddaughters were as likely as their grandmothers to work in clerical and service occupations, as opposed to other, less female-typed occupations.

Relationships Among Variables in the Model

Table 3 presents parameter estimates for the BIC-best model (Model 8 from Table 2) of occupational attainment. The literature reviewed above led us to the prediction that generation would

TABLE 3. PARAMETER ESTIMATES FOR SELECTED MODEL OF THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN OCCUPATIONAL ORIGINS, OCCUPATIONAL DESTINATIONS, GENDER, AND GENERATION: LONGITUDINAL SURVEY OF GENERATIONS

Two-Way Interactions	Estimate	*t* value
Generation × occupational origins [GO]		
Generation (scale) × farm origins	−1.47	8.77
Generation 2 × production origins	0.58	3.64
Generation 3 × production origins	−1.00	5.26
Generation 3 × upper nonmanual origins	0.66	3.56
Generation × occupational destinations [GD]		
Generation 2 × production destinations	−1.56	8.40
Generation 3 × production destinations	−1.34	6.09
Generation (scale) × upper nonmanual destinations	0.45	4.45
Gender × occupational destinations [SD]		
Female × professional destinations	—	—
Female × managerial destinations	−0.25	1.30
Female × clerical destinations	2.20	9.48
Female × sales destinations	0.28	1.09
Female × service destinations	0.94	3.59
Female × farm destinations	−0.27	0.50
Female × production destinations	−0.52	2.58
Gender × generation [SG]		
Female × generation 3	0.71	5.09
Occupational origins × occupational destinations [OD]		
Origin SES × destination SES	0.22	2.81
Occupational diagonal (if origin = destination then 1, otherwise 0)	0.83	5.68
Farm with nonfarm origins or destinations (= 1, otherwise 0)	−0.95	3.72
Three-way interactions ([SOD] and [GOD])		
Female × occupational origins/destinations association (diagonal)	−0.38	2.33
Generation (scale) × occupational origins/destinations association (diagonal)	−0.38	3.75

Note: Upper nonmanual category includes professional and managerial occupations. Coefficients involving SES multiplied by 1,000.

have a linear effect on various outcomes—that the occupational attainments of each new generation would be higher than the one before, or that the association between occupational origin and destination would be weaker for each subsequent generation relative to the one before. To capture this potentially ordered feature of the data, we created a variable that treats generation as a scale, equal to 0 for G1s, 1 for G2s, and 2 for G3s. When this generation scale variable fit better than a categorical treatment of generation in various interactions, we included it instead of the categorical version.

The "Generation by Occupational Origins" interactions indicate that each generation is less likely than the one before to come from farm origins (–1.47). The G2s are more likely than the G1s to come from production origins (.58). The G3s are less likely than the G1s to come from production origins (–1.00) and more likely to come from upper-level nonmanual origins (.66). The "Generation by Occupational Destinations" interactions show that G2s and G3s were equally less likely than G1s to end up in production occupations (–1.56 and –1.34) and that, with each generation, the odds of ending up in upper level nonmanual destinations—both professional and managerial occupations—systematically increased. A .45 coefficient means that relative to the G1s, the G2s had 45% greater odds of entering the highest occupations, and the G3s had 90% greater odds. This finding supports Hypothesis 2—that holding constant gender and origin occupation, each subsequent generation has higher attainments than the one before and that each subsequent generation has greater odds of being upwardly mobile than the one before.

The "Gender by Generation" interaction takes into account the greater proportion of females among the Time 2 G3s. The "Gender by Occupational Destinations" interactions show that the occupational distribution of female respondents is significantly different from the occupational distribution of male respondents (independent of occupational origins and generation). Women, regardless of their generation, are significantly more likely than men to hold clerical and service occupations (2.20 and .94), and significantly less likely to hold manual/production occupations as craftsmen, operatives, or laborers. The female × managerial destinations coefficient is also negative (–.25), but not statistically significant.

We found that the best way to model the interaction between "Occupational Origins" and "Occupational Destinations" was to include three parameters. First, following Hout (1984, 1988), we include a term (origin SES × destination SES) that represents overall resemblance between origin and destination occupational status. Using a measure based on Duncan's (1961) socioeconomic index, we calculated an average status score for each of the seven occupational stratum (using the Occupational Changes in a Generation-II Survey, OCG-II, 1973). Then we attached the scores to their respective origin and destination occupational categories and multiplied the origin/destination status scores together to estimate the overall (scaled) association between fathers' and offsprings' socioeconomic statuses.

The resultant .22 coefficient shows a significant association between the status of respondents' origin occupational stratum and the status of respondents' destination occupational stratum. This coefficient is less than half the size of Hout's (.56, from OCG-II data, 1984), because the seven-category occupational classification scheme used here reduces variance in the status scores relative to the variance in status across Hout's (1984) 17-category occupational classification scheme.

The second variable used to capture the association between occupational origins and destinations represents immobility on the occupational diagonal of the mobility table—or direct occupational stratum inheritance (if $i = j$, then 1, otherwise 0). Labeled the "quasi-perfect mobility-constrained" model in social mobility research (see Hout, 1983), the variable tests the proposition that immobility exceeds what would be expected, under the assumption of independence, by the same proportion in all occupational categories. The .83 coefficient tells us that there is a strong tendency for sons and daughters to end up in the same occupational stratum they were born into. Of the three variables used to model the occupational origin/destination association, this one is the most important, the one with the highest t value, and the one that explains the greatest percentage of the total association in the table.

The third variable used to describe the nature of the association between occupational origins and destinations is a dummy variable (from Hout, 1984) representing mobility into and out of farming. The coefficient –.95 shows that there is less movement into and out of farming than would be expected under a model that included only the two terms discussed above. This effect is the same size as the effect found in Hout (1984,

1988). Barriers to mobility into farming and out of farming are well known and have been discussed elsewhere (Blau & Duncan, 1967, pp. 58-67).

The final coefficients, for the "Three-Way Interactions," represent the conditioning effects of gender and generation, respectively, on intergenerational occupational inheritance. Intergenerational inheritance of occupational stratum is 38% weaker for daughters than for sons. Daughters are less likely than sons to end up in the same occupational stratum as their fathers, even after the direct effect of gender on occupational destinations is taken into account.

The association between occupational origins and destinations weakened with each successive generation (Hypothesis 1). Among G2s, the inheritance of occupational stratum is 38% weaker than the G1s' experience of intergenerational occupational inheritance. Among G3s, intergenerational inheritance is 76% weaker than that experienced by G1s. Association on the well-known intergenerational occupational diagonal is found here to decline across three generations.

Discussion

In this diachronic analysis of social mobility, we have followed family members down intergenerational lineages and across generations. The sample consists of predominantly White families who, in 1971, had been in the United States for at least three generations. Among this group, we have found both change and stability in the patterns of mobility across generations.

Hypothesis 1 predicted a weakening in intergenerational occupational transmission across generations. This hypothesis was supported. For the G1 children, occupational origins strongly determined the positions they would occupy as adults. There was a very strong resemblance between G1 children and their parents. For the G2 children, the inheritance of occupational strata weakened. For the G3 children, intergenerational occupational inheritance declined further. While part of the upward mobility experienced by each successive generation was produced by changes in the occupational structure, another part was produced by this weakening in the regime connecting the occupational stratum of fathers with that of sons and daughters.

The findings supporting Hypothesis 1 describe a pattern of declining intergenerational transmission of socioeconomic stratum with each new generation. The next step in this research is to explain the pattern. What are the processes (both intrafamily and extrafamily) that made these changes in intergenerational inheritance across generations possible? Were the factors that produced change from G1s to G2s the same as the factors that produced change from G2s to G3s?

Hout (1984, 1988) shows that education may condition the relationship between occupational origins and destinations—the association between occupational origins and destinations was not significant among respondents with college degrees in a recent period. The occupational destinations of G2s may have been less determined by their origins than those of the G1s because the G2s may have had greater access than the G1s to higher education. The G3s may have had even more access to higher education than the G2s, but they also may have been the first of the three generations examined here to experience their parents' divorces during childhood. Like education, the experience of family disruption also reduces intergenerational inheritance (Biblarz & Raftery, 1993), in part through its effect on family resources available to children. At the same time, family size (both the size of the family that children grow up in, and the number of children they have as adults) and parental childrearing values and practices covary with each generation and may affect occupational inheritance and social mobility. To address these issues, we are investigating the degree to which members of each generation experienced the social changes and family processes that are hypothesized to affect social mobility.

An alternative possibility is that the mother's occupation begins to supplant the father's occupation as a primary determinant of their offspring's occupation. Perhaps the family transmission of occupation has not so much weakened as shifted from one parent to the other. Women have joined the paid labor force in increasing numbers over recent decades. As more mothers are employed (and as fewer families have a father present), the mother's occupation may become a better proxy than the father's occupation for family resources that affect the intergenerational transmission process.

Hypothesis 2 predicted that each generation would achieve overall higher occupational positions than its parent generation. This hypothesis was also supported. Each successive generation of children appeared to benefit from (or was affected by) macroscopic changes in the occupational structure since the turn of the century. The fathers of the G1s—the G0s—were more likely to

work in farming than any other occupation. The G1s exited farming (or were forced out), and entered industry, as workers rather than as managers. Their offspring, the G2s, crossed the line from manual to nonmanual work, and entered clerical, managerial, and professional occupations. The G3s never looked back, becoming further concentrated in the higher strata.

These findings reflect structural changes and tell how forces exogenous to the family make the experiences of new generations of family members different from the experiences of earlier generations. Each generation had greater odds than the one before of membership in the highest occupational strata, independent of origins, in part because each new generation confronted the labor market at a later point in the 20th century and benefited from shifts in the number of positions available in each occupational strata (Featherman & Hauser, 1978). The greater similarity in the occupational distributions of the G2s and G3s, relative to the level of similarity in the occupational distributions of the G1s and G2s, suggests that changes in the occupational structure confronted by LSG respondents have slowed down. One implication is that new generations will have a more difficult time experiencing upward mobility than previous generations.

Hypothesis 3 predicted that gender-based differences in occupations would decline with each generation. This hypothesis was not supported. We found very little change across generations in the ascriptive effect of gender on occupation (Gross, 1968; Jacobs, 1989). Grandmothers working in the 1940s, mothers working in the 1960s, and daughters working in the 1980s were subjected to very similar experiences of occupational segregation.

These findings are consistent with the conclusion that gender-based occupational discrimination has made it equally difficult for three successive generations of daughters to choose occupations that go against type. However, our use of broad occupational categories will necessarily conceal job desegregation (or resegregation; see Reskin & Roos, 1994) that may be occurring within those categories. At the same time, since we select only respondents who have occupational origins and destinations, any decline across generations in gender differences in participation in the paid labor force—another kind of desegregation—is also concealed.

This article began with the question of resource transmission from one generation to the next. Bengtson (1975) found continuity in value orientations across three generations of LSG respondents. The present analysis shifts the dependent variable from values to position in the social structure and finds greater contrast between the generations in the LSG. For this group, cultural continuity has not been accompanied by a similar level of structural continuity. This may have important consequences for families and intergenerational relationships.

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