SOCIAL CAPITAL AND THE NORMATIVE ORDER OF LIFE EVENTS AMONG AT-RISK FEMALE YOUTH[1]

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Abstract

This paper explores the moderating effects of family-based social capital on the normative order of life events among at-risk female youth. Data from the National Longitudinal Survey of Young Women are used to examine the transition to: 1) high school completion, 2) consistent labor force participation, 3) first birth, and 4) first marriage. Female adolescents 14 to 16 years of age in 1968 constitute the study sample. Young women are observed for a period of 20 years (1968 to 1988).

Findings indicate strong racial disparities in the dominant order of life events for young women. Specifically, whites are significantly more likely than blacks to complete high school before any other life event. Black women are significantly more likely than white women to experience a first birth prior to a transition to work, school completion, or marriage, and enter the labor force last in the sequence of observed life events. Risk status influences the likelihood of a particular first event, but has limited impact on subsequent transitions. This patterns is observed for white and black women. Exposure to family-based social capital increases the likelihood of high school completion and stable employment before marriage and childbearing, particularly among at-risk black women. Social capital also significantly contributes to eventual high school completion among young school-age mothers.

The need to examine cultural differences in the dominant order of life events, and the need for further exploration of positive supports disadvantaged families provide for their children is discussed.

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INTRODUCTION

All individuals experience role transitions into non-family and family careers, such as entry into school and entry into the labor force, or entry into marriage and entry into parenthood. Movement into and out of such life roles are at the core of how society functions, and have been the focus of sociological research for several decades (Loomis and Hamilton, 1936; Elder, 1975; Hogan, 1978; Rindfuss, Swicegood, and Rosenfeld, 1987). In particular, studies have examined the normative order of life events across the life course of young men (Hogan, 1978), and the relative impact of an orderly sequence of events on specific life transitions, including fertility (Rindfuss, Bumpass, and St. John, 1980), employment (Featherman and Carter, 1976; Hogan, 1978; Rindfuss, Swicegood, and Rosenfeld, 1987), and socioeconomic stability (Marini, Shin and Raymond, 1989).

There has been discussion among researchers of the life course, however, as to whether the sequence of life transitions are normative in the truest sense (Marini, 1984). Studies indicate variability in life trajectories of young adults (Rindfuss, Swicegood, and Rosenfeld, 1987), and significant differences in the dominant pattern of family and non-family events across race/ethnicity subgroups (Moore and Snyder, 1993).

Despite this evidence, relatively few studies explore the determinants of a particular sequence of life events among young adults, or whether such factors demonstrate consistent effects across different population subgroups. Subgroup differences in the sequencing of life events may reflect differences in cultural norms about roles that women and men occupy, or the range of sequences that are deemed to be permissible among different groups of people.

In this paper we explore: 1) the transition to adulthood among a cohort of young women by examining the order of activities in non-family -- school and work-- and family careers -- birth and marriage, and; 2) the extent to which a particular sequence of events is affected by the level of socioeconomic disadvantage and family-

based social capital. We examine race differences in the pattern of life events in non-family and family domains, and explore whether social capital provides differential effects on the pathways to adult life for white and black women.

Our study addresses the following research questions:

- What is the dominant order of life events across family and non-family careers among this cohort of young women?
- Are there race or socioeconomic differences in the sequence of family and non-family events?
- What is the impact of social capital on the life trajectories of at-risk young women? That is, does social capital alter the temporal order of life events, or influence subsequent transitions within family and non-family life trajectories among disadvantaged young women?

BACKGROUND

Our study is guided by two theoretical orientations. The first is the Life Course perspective (Elder, 1975, 1983), which focusses on the history of adult roles and the relative timing of various life events across the adult life span. The second theoretical supposition is Social Capital (Coleman, 1988, 1990) which addresses investments in the development of children and youth.

Life Course Perspective

Virtually all individuals in contemporary society undergo important life and role transitions, such as getting married or divorced, starting a family, starting a new job, or moving into retirement in the later years of life. The transformation into adult status and the history of events over the duration of adult life constitutes the life course. (See Hogan and Astone, 1986 for a review of the Life Course literature).

Life course research is founded on two primary assumptions. The first assumption is that transitional events are "age graded". That is, there is an appropriate time or age when certain adult behaviors should occur for the first time. Generally, there is broad social agreement as to the best time, or age range, for those events, (as well as what those events are), and adults regulate that transition by instituting both social and legal sanctions to discourage behaviors at inappropriate times. For instance, being able to vote and drive a car symbolize, for

adults and youth alike, a rite of passage into adulthood. Both are legally and socially accepted at a specific age -- 18, the legal voting age, and 16 the legal driving age. Individuals who violate the age-graded norms, particularly driving, face legal and social ramifications for their actions.

The second basic assumption of life course theory is that life transitions ought to be made in an appropriate or "normative" order (Elder, 1975; Modell, 1980; Neugarten et al, 1965). For instance, high school completion should occur before labor force participation, or marriage should occur before the birth of one's first child. While there are no legal repercussions for an out-of-sequence set of transitions, the social fall-out in some instances is quite high. The debate on adolescent childbearing is a prime example of society's discomfort with non-normative life transitions among youth. While society's concern for early childbearing is, in part, over the fact that births occur too early in the life course, the biggest concern is that teen births, more often than not, occur before marriage, or before completion of school and the attainment of economic independence. Thus, the society's preoccupation with early childbearing is with the non-normativeness of a birth relative to other adult behaviors.

There is disagreement among researchers studying the life course as to the magnitude of the impact of a non-normative order of life events. Some studies indicate, for example, that a birth prior to completing high school decreases educational attainment and the likelihood of economic stability even when socioeconomic background and educational goals are controlled (Card and Wise, 1978; Moore and Waite, 1978; Moore, Myers, Morrison, Brown, Nord and Edmonston, 1993).

Others find variability in life attainments among young mothers (Furstenberg, Brooks-Gunn, and Morgan, 1987), and that post-secondary education and consistent labor force participation is often achieved by disadvantaged young women who experience motherhood at an early age (Sugland, Blumenthal, and Hyatt, 1993). Further evidence suggests that the association between the timing and sequencing of particular role changes, (e.g., school completion before birth) is most critical for future life outcomes (Marini, Shin and Raymond, 1989).

Still others question whether the order of life events is truly normative (Marini, 1984). Indeed, studies document variability in the order of life events. For instance, studies exploring the relationship of labor market

experience and status attainment show that some individuals interrupt their schooling to enter the labor force, while others pursue their education while continuing to work full-time (Marini et al., 1989; Rindfuss, Swicegood, and Rosenfeld, 1987). Further studies show strong racial differences in patterns of role transitions over the life course. For example, black women demonstrate a greater propensity for childbearing prior to school completion than white women (Upchurch and McCarthy, 1990); first births among black women are also more likely to occur outside of marriage than first births among white women (Moore and Snyder, 1993). Thus, young people choose to invest different amounts of time in their education or training, and individuals enter adult roles at different ages and experience life events in different orders.

Given the variability in the temporal order of life events, and the continued discussion as to the substantive importance of a "normative" sequence of life events, it would be helpful to learn more about the factors that contribute to particular life trajectories, as well as factors that act to minimize the negative effects of an atypical sequence of life events when they do occur.

Unfortunately, we find relatively few studies of the life course that focus on the predictors of the normative order of life transitions. Hogan (1978) finds that family background (e.g., father's education, family income) and ethnic origin are of limited importance for the order of events over the life course among young men. However, social forces, such as norms about schooling, employment, or participation in the military, demonstrate significant effects on the temporal ordering of life events for young men.

Astone and Upchurch (1991) also find that changes in the social context for the roles women occupy, such as increases in educational opportunities for women, or the demand for female labor, contribute to whether women pursue educational or occupational careers versus family careers. Yet this work does not examine the particular sequence of family and non-family careers, or what contextual factors contribute to the order of life events that young women experience.

Work focussing on the impact of social capital, or ways in which families invest in their children's human capital, may shed some light on the various contextual and family-level processes that contribute to life outcomes

among young adults.

Social Capital

The second theoretical supposition upon which our study is based is social capital, a term defined by Coleman (1988, 1990) to highlight a type of investment in the development of human capital[2] of the next generation. Human capital is produced by working with individuals either through training programs, schools, mentoring or some other method that imparts new capabilities to them. The trust, consensus, shared values, and commitment that arise from "working with individuals" is the social capital investments essential for the creation of human capital in the next generation of adults.

Two facets of Coleman's theory of social capital are particularly relevant for the current study. The first facet has to do with the nature of relationships between individuals and between individuals and various institutions, such as schools and churches. In fact, social capital characterizes the quantity and quality of interactions and the bonds that develop among family and community members. Strong bonds require the physical presence of parents, and/or sustained contact with parents, their attention and involvement. This constant vigil, so to speak, allows parents to provide a relatively closed, highly monitored environment, where norms can be transmitted, and rewards and sanctions used to shape behavior. Thus, embedded in the social capital model are the mechanisms for how parents, families, communities, instill values and norms about adult life to young people, and how they prepare the next generation for adult life.

A second important aspect of Coleman's model is that parental and community investments are not purely dependent upon socioeconomic status or financial resources. Parents and communities, regardless of available financial or human capital, still have discretion over how resources may be used. In fact, Coleman argues that unless parents use discretion over their financial and human capital resources to invest in their children, the socialization of children will suffer. Indeed, parental human and financial capital may be irrelevant to children's

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[2]Human capital, developed in the early 1960s by economists (Schultz, 1961; Becker, 1964) is the acquired skills, capabilities and knowledge of an individual that increases productivity.

well-being if it is used exclusively for parental pursuits outside the home.

Several studies not specifically designed to test the theory of social capital support the notion of discretionary use of family resources. Teachman (1987) determined that the quality of the home environment is only weakly related to socioeconomic indicators, and home environments do impact on child outcomes over and above socioeconomic status. Thus, disadvantaged or "at-risk" families are capable of and do make sizeable investments in their children's future despite limited resources. A reasonable next question may well be then to what extent does social capital influence the life trajectories of young women, particularly young women from disadvantaged backgrounds.

METHODS

Data for this analysis are taken from the National Longitudinal Survey of Young Women (NLSYW). The NLSYW is a nationally representative sample of approximately 5,000 young women 14 to 24 years of age, interviewed between 1968 and 1988. The NLSYW contains fertility and marital histories, school and labor force participation data, and a wide range of background and adolescent characteristics. Across this 20 year data collection, the overall attrition rate was roughly 32 percent (Center for Human Resource Research, 1992).

The sample for this study (n=1,082) is comprised of a subset of all females from the NLSYW cohort who were 14 to 16 years of age at first interview (1968), and who had not completed high school, given birth, entered the labor force, or gotten married prior to the first interview in 1968, and who had complete information for all four events of interest. Women in the sample are followed from 1968, when they are 14 to 16 years old, to the last interview in 1988, when they are 34 to 36 years old.

Event history techniques (Allison, 1984) are used to identify the transition to school completion, childbearing, marriage, and labor force participation. Event transitions are documented for women ever making the transition to each event by the end of the study period. Dates for when each event occurred are then sorted, thereby allowing us to determine the temporal ordering of life events among our sample. High school completion and consistent labor force participation serve as measures to the transition to non-family careers among our

sample; transitions to birth and marriage are assessed to examine the transition to family careers given their significant influence on the non-family life attainments of young women (Marini, 1978; Alexander and Eckland, 1974). We focus on the first transition to each of these events, fully recognizing that subsequent events (e.g., higher order births, subsequent marriages, movement in/out of the labor force) are quite likely. First transitions are explored because the scientific and policy debates surrounding at-risk youth focus on the importance of first transitions for subsequent life outcomes.

In addition, as the purpose of our work is to determine the dominant sequence of events, and to assess the impact of social capital on the temporal order of the events of interest, we examine the predominant temporal order of events among women in our sample, rather than the degree to which women's life trajectories conform to a predetermined temporal order. The rationale for this approach is twofold. First, studies of the life course suggest a high degree of variability in the temporal order of family and non-family events over the life course, particularly for women. Second, the scientific discourse regarding the disorder in the life course suggests a need to consider social norms as a determinant of the order of life events. We view our work as adding to that discussion by documenting the temporal order of events and exploring racial differences in the temporal order of family and non-family trajectories, and whether background and family characteristics influence the pathways to adulthood among young women.

Conditional crosstabulations are used to assess initial and subsequent life transitions among our study sample. Analyses are conducted separately for whites and blacks, as racial disparities have been demonstrated both in the presence of disadvantage and event transition probabilities.

MEASURES

Independent Variables

Our major independent variable is the availability and amount of social capital at age 14. Social capital is a summary measure comprised of three individual items: 1) the amount of encouragement from mother and

teacher for post-secondary education;[3] 2) parental educational goals for the female respondent; and 3) the availability of three types of reading materials in the home (i.e. newspapers, magazines, and a library card; see Appendix for detailed description of each item and the summary measure). Our social capital measure is not a comprehensive index reflecting family or community life. Rather, it focuses on one dimension of family-based social capital directed primarily at investments for educational attainment. For example, we hypothesize that encouragement from one's mother for post-secondary education indicates whether the family environment is supportive of higher learning; a supportive mother would be more likely to persuade young women to move ahead in school by encouraging her child's present and future educational endeavors. Mothers that directly encourage their children are also more apt to have high goals or standards for their children, and to provide resources for children that support educational activities and involvement with the school community (Rumberger, 1983).

In addition to support from adults at home, encouragement from teachers is also important as it helps to sustain parents' efforts. Like parents, teachers who encourage educational pursuits among their students most likely have high goals for their students and are more apt to assist youth in identifying additional resources supportive of educational endeavors through access to reading materials or information, participation in job or college fairs, and access to other adults/professionals in the community (Farkas, Grobe, Sheehan and Shuan, 1990).

A second independent variable, risk status, is included to stratify women by socioeconomic disadvantage. Our composite risk index is the sum of six individual background characteristics, including parental education, number of siblings, family structure, parental occupation, mother's employment, and opportunity in the local environment (see Appendix for a detailed description of the index). We have chosen to use traditional indicators

[3]Young women were also asked about encouragement from fathers for post-secondary education. However, this question was only asked if the respondent lived with the father at age 14. Race differences in the proportion of women living in single-parent families contributed to a high proportion of missing data for this variable limiting its use in our composite measure of social capital.

of socioeconomic status as measures of risk for two reasons. First, the social science literature typically uses measures of economic and social disadvantage to operationalize risk (Dubow and Luster, 1990; Dryfoos, 1991). Although we acknowledge that a more ecological approach to defining risk and disadvantage is needed, we use these traditional measures to facilitate the comparisons of our findings with prior research. Second, although many of the individual risk items have been linked with adult life events, relatively little work has been done on developing a composite risk measure or exploring the influence of multiple risk factors on life attainments. We view this study as an opportunity to expand our knowledge of the additive effect of individual measures of socioeconomic disadvantage on youth outcomes.

Dependent Variables

Four event transitions are documented -- high school completion, first birth, first marriage, and consistent labor force participation.

High School Completion

High school completion is a measure of minimal educational attainment in contemporary American society. Failure to complete high school typically precludes post-secondary education, and limits employment opportunities and level of income (Morgan, 1984). Our measure of high school completion includes graduation from regular school and completion of a GED program.

Consistent Labor Force Participation

Transition to the work force is an important event marking the beginning of stable employment, family and personal income. Women who are able to secure employment and do so consistently over a period of time, have a social and economic advantage over women with little or no employment experience. In our study, women are defined as being consistently in the labor force if they are: employed at least 20 hours per week for 2/3 of the year for two consecutive years. Our definition of consistent labor force participation is less stringent than, for example, the definition of full-time employment, (i.e., 52 weeks per year). A more flexible measure of female employment is needed to reflect the competing demands of marriage and childbearing which may limit the nature

of women's involvement in the labor force, and to take into consideration the relatively young age of our sample, many of whom may not have achieved consistent full-time employment by the end of the study period.

First Birth

Childbearing influences and is influenced by education, employment and marriage, and is a necessary component for understanding the life course of young women (Alexander and Eckland, 1974; Marini, 1978). Furthermore, childbearing has received enormous attention as a central component of the debate on life attainments among young women (Upchurch and McCarthy, 1990; Furstenberg, 1991; Hoffman, Foster, and Furstenberg, 1993; Moore, Krysan, Rhoads and Brown, 1991; Moore, Myers, Morrison, Nord, Brown and Edmonston, 1993; Geronimus, 1992; Geronimus and Korenman, 1993).

First Marriage

Marriage is also strongly correlated with family formation and labor force participation. For some women, marriage provides economic stability precluding the need for full-time employment. Others, despite the additional income and support from a spouse, find it necessary to work to help support the family. For some, marriage is a proxy for sexual onset, for others it marks the beginning of parenthood (Marini, 1978).

RESULTS

Distribution of Family and Community Characteristics

We begin our analysis by exploring the background characteristics of our sample and identifying important subgroup distinctions in family and community characteristics. Table 1 presents the distributions of family background and environment characteristics, risk, and social capital by race. The findings in Table 1 demonstrate that there are substantial racial differences in family and community characteristics, and risk, yet few racial disparities in the presence of social capital. Specifically, substantially more black women are from

Insert Table 1 About Here

disadvantaged families relative to white women. For example, the mean family income of whites is $35,786, roughly 2 1/4 times the mean family income of blacks in the sample ($15,908). White women generally come from a two-parent, moderately sized family. Roughly 30 percent of whites have at least one parent with some college education, and about 12 percent are in poverty. Black women in our sample, on the other hand, tend to come from large, single-parent families. Only 5.5 percent have a parent with more than a high school education and 62 percent are in poverty. A greater proportion of blacks than whites reside in a large city and live in an area with an unemployment rate of 6 percent or more.

When combining individual measures of risk, we note that 69 percent of blacks have three or more of the individual risk items, or can be defined as high-risk, compared to 21 percent of whites who can be described as high-risk.[4]

Despite strong racial differences in economic resources, racial differences in the level of family investments are considerably smaller, suggesting that discretion in the use of limited resources does exist. For instance, 46 percent of black women are from families where social capital is high, compared with 64 percent of white women. Furthermore, the racial disparities in the level of social capital appear to stem primarily from the lack of available reading materials in the home. Less than one-quarter of blacks have access to all three reading items, compared with 67 percent of whites; the presence of social capital as measured by the remaining two items is fairly comparable across race.

[4]Racial disparities in risk status may reflect sampling strategies used in the NLSYW rather than true race differences. For example, while the NLSYW contains an oversampling of black women, supplemental samples of disadvantaged white women were not conducted. As a result, the sample of white women in the NLSYW is less heterogenous with respect to socioeconomic status.

Temporal Order of Life Events

Transition to Non-Family Careers

The next step in our analysis is to document the dominant order of life events among young women in our sample. Tables 2 and 3 present the conditional probabilities for young women, by race, making the initial transition to non-family and family careers respectively. We note several patterns in the life trajectories of young women. For example, in Table 2, we observe that the majority of women in this cohort, irrespective of race, initially transition to non-family careers by completing high school first, although whites (84 percent) are more likely than blacks (53 percent) to do so. Conversely, few women in our sample make their initial entry into non-family careers via the labor force (roughly 3 percent).

Distributions of second events among women making an initial transition to non-family careers also indicate race differences. Among whites who complete school first, 41 percent continue on a non-family career trajectory by entering the labor force; 57 percent, however, transition to marriage after high school. Subsequent transitions among black women indicate a transition to family careers via marriage (32 percent) and childbearing (28 percent) after high school, although a higher proportion of blacks continue on the non-family life trajectory by entering the labor force (39 percent).

Insert Table 2 about here

Distributions of third and four events indicate that whites who marry after high school appear equally as likely to continue on the family trajectory (e.g., 50 percent experience a first birth) as the non-family trajectory (e.g., 50 percent enter the labor force). However, whites who go to work directly after completing high school typically transition to marriage (73 percent), and then a first birth (72 percent).

Among black women, the pattern of events subsequent to school completion continue to be somewhat more evenly distributed across family and non-family careers, with the exception of those black women who

marry after high school. Black women who marry subsequent to high school completion are more likely to experience a birth (64 percent) than black women who enter the labor force (28 percent) after completing school. The majority of these women, however, transition to the labor force after the birth of their first child (90 percent).

Transition to Family Careers

Table 3 illustrates that young women also demonstrate an initial transition to family careers, although to a lesser extent than non-family careers. An initial transition to family life occurs primarily through marriage for whites, and through birth and marriage for blacks. In fact, thirty-two percent of black women progress directly to a first birth before completing school or experiencing any other event; the respective proportion of whites making an initial transition to motherhood is 2.5 percent. Similar, but modest proportions of white and black women enter marriage as their first event (11 percent).

Among whites who experienced marriage as their first event, we observe that nearly two-thirds experience a first birth after marriage, but slightly more than one-fourth complete high school. Among those who give birth after marriage, about half (48 percent) enter the labor force, while less than one-fifth (18 percent) complete high school. Among those who complete school after marriage, 63 percent become mothers, and 32 percent go into the labor force.

Among blacks who experience a birth first, 48 percent go on to complete school, 35 percent get married, and a smaller percentage (14 percent) go into the labor force. Among those who initially marry, the majority (75 percent) transition to a first birth. Distributions of third and fourth events are similar across the remaining events, also indicating a high degree of variability in the life trajectories of black women.

Insert Table 3 about here

In sum, two main findings emerge from Tables 2 and 3. First we note a strong propensity for an initial transition to school completion, generally followed by marriage (family trajectory) or labor force participation

(non-family trajectory). The temporal pattern begins to vary, however, after the second life transition. This supports other studies (Hogan, 1978) which suggest that life events after high school, particularly for young women and across family and non-family domains, are quite fluid and lack the precision of a specific temporal order.

Second, we observe strong racial differences in the transition to first and subsequent life events. For instance, life trajectories for whites are characterized generally by two temporal patterns: 1) an initial transition to school completion followed by marriage, with an equal propensity for work and childbearing subsequent to marriage (e.g., School-Marriage, Work, Birth; School, Marriage, Birth, Work),and; 2) school completion followed by work, marriage, and childbearing. Marriage typically precedes a birth in the temporal order of event transitions. Black women, however, demonstrate a lower probability of completing school first, and a greater probability of motherhood prior to school, marriage or work, than whites; a birth prior to marriage is observed primarily among black women who experience motherhood right after completing school. In addition, the variability in the temporal order of life events among blacks occurs by the second event, irrespective of whether the first event was school completion or a first birth, indicating a great deal of diversity in life trajectories for black women at earlier stages in the life course.

Risk and the Dominant Order of Life Events

Table 4 presents the distributions of first and second transitions for black and white women by risk status. We limit our discussion to the first two conditional events because earlier analyses indicate that both white and black women progress through a variety of pathways after the second transition. To discuss all of them certainly goes beyond the scope of this paper. Furthermore, because the potential for several different life trajectories is great, the total number of women moving through any one trajectory is, in many instances, quite small. This further limits our ability for any meaningful presentation or interpretation of these data.

In Table 4 we observe that the dominant order of life trajectories remains virtually the same for whites and blacks, regardless of risk status, although we note the negative impact of risk on the likelihood of high school

completion. Low-risk white women demonstrate a greater likelihood for completing school (88 percent) than white women from more disadvantaged backgrounds (70 percent). High risk whites are also more likely to marry first (20 percent) compared with their low-risk counterparts (9 percent). Risk status has no significant effect on the likelihood of a particular second event, however, among white women.

Socioeconomic disadvantage has a significant impact on the first event among black women as well. High risk blacks are less likely to complete school first, and more likely to experience a first birth than low-risk blacks. However, the proportion of low-risk blacks to experience a first birth (19 percent) is still substantially higher than the proportion of low-risk whites who transitioned to a birth first (1.4 percent). We note that the number of low-risk blacks in our sample is quite small, and these percentages should be interpreted with caution. However, the fact that risk status has a modest impact on the racial distinctions in the dominant order of life events supports other studies that suggest group-specific or group-normative patterns in fertility behavior (Furstenberg, Moore, and Peterson, 1987). That is, the norms governing which events occur, when they occur, and in what order, may be determined by the cultural and social mores of a particular group.

Insert Table 4 about here

Social Capital and the Dominant Order of Life Events

We move to the last analytic question in this study. Specifically, does social capital influence the dominant life course trajectories among young women, particularly disadvantaged women? This final stage of the study explores the life trajectories of women who experienced the dominant first event transitions just described. For whites, this includes women who first completed high school and who married first. For blacks, this includes women with high school completion or motherhood as their initial events. We note that whites who completed high school first primarily are from low-risk families that are high in social capital (60 percent); twenty-two percent of low-risk whites from families low in social capital also completed high school first.

Blacks, regardless of their first event, come from family situations with a broad mix risk and social capital. The exception being blacks making the initial transition to motherhood. Sixty-four percent of them are from high-risk families with low family investments.

Given these initial descriptions of dominant first events by risk and family investments, we explore the second transitions women experienced taking into account risk, social capital, and initial life events. Figure 1 presents the percent distributions of the second event by social capital for low-risk whites completing high school first. Figures 2 illustrates the same distributions for high-risk whites. Data in Figure 1 suggest that social capital does not influence the type of second event low-risk white women experience given they first finished high school. Regardless of the level of family investments, whites who completed high school first tend primarily to marry after graduation, although roughly 40 percent have transitioned to the labor force as well. Very few low risk whites who complete high school first go on to become mothers. Among those who do, however, the proportions are greatest for women from families with limited social capital.

The impact of social capital on the distribution of second events given high school completion is consistent among high-risk white women as well. More than half of high risk whites, regardless of social capital, marry next after completing high school. A fair number also entered the labor force, although the proportion making the transition to work was smallest for whites from low-social capital families. Few high risk whites also experienced motherhood directly after completing school, but again the proportion was highest for low-social capital, high-risk whites (7 percent) .

Insert Figures 1 & 2 about here

Second Life Events Among Whites Who Married First

While social capital demonstrated relatively little impact on the type of second transitions for whites who first completed high school, its impact on second transitions for whites who married first (particularly high-risk

whites) is rather strong. The impact, however, is greatest for school completion subsequent to marriage. Both Figures 3 and 4 show that whites who married first are most likely to have a first birth after marriage, regardless of their family's risk or social capital characteristics. High risk white girls with low family investments were overwhelmingly more likely than all white women to make the transition to motherhood (91 percent).

The next popular second event among whites who initially married is high school completion. Social capital influences school completion among women with a first transition of marriage. In particular, women from high-social capital families appear most able to complete school after marriage, particularly high-risk whites from families with high investments (54 percent). In fact, the proportion of high-risk, high social capital whites completing school after marriage is actually higher than the proportion of low-risk, high social capital whites completing school (40 percent). Few white women entered the labor force after marriage and for those who did, most were of low-risk status and social capital had little impact on the likelihood of labor force attachment.

In general, clear and consistent patterns for second transitions emerged for white women who experienced the two dominant first events -- high school completion and marriage: Whites who completed high school first transitioned directly to marriage; whites who married first, generally transitioned to motherhood, except for whites from high risk backgrounds also high in social capital, who were most likely to complete high school after marriage. The moderating influence of social capital on second event transitions was negligible among whites who completed high school first; its impact among women who transitioned first to marriage was particularly strong for high-risk whites where it increased the likelihood of high school completion after marriage.

Insert Figures 3 & 4

Second Life Events Among Blacks Who First Completed High School

Figures 5 and 6 present the distributions of second events by social capital for low-risk and high-risk black women respectively who completed high school first. The patterns observed are different from those

observed for whites in that social capital consistently impacts on the likelihood and the type of second event. The one exception is for low-risk blacks from low-social capital families (Figure 5) where family investments have no impact on the second event among blacks who first completed high school.

In Figure 5 (low-risk black women) we note that black women with high educational investments are most likely to make the transition to work after completing high school (45 percent). In addition, low-risk blacks from families high in educational investments were less likely than low-risk blacks with high social capital to make a transition to motherhood after completing high school. Social capital had no impact on transition marriage after high school completion among low-risk black women.

The impact of social capital among high-risk black women (Figure 6) is quite clear and in many ways consistent with the distributions in Figure 5. Among high social capital black women identified as high risk, the majority make the transition to the labor force after completing school (47 percent), followed by marriage (29 percent) and motherhood (21 percent). The dominant order of second event transitions among low-social capital blacks is the direct opposite -- motherhood is most likely to occur next after school completion (41 percent) and the transition to work least likely after school completion (22 percent).

Insert Figures 5 & 6

Second Life Events Among Blacks Who Gave Birth First

Social capital also influences the likelihood of second events after a first birth among black women (Figures 7 and 8). In fact, the level of family investments had a notable impact on the transition to high school completion after a first birth, regardless of risk status. More than 80 percent of blacks, low-risk and high-risk, from high social capital families went on to graduate from high school after a first birth, compared to blacks from low-social capital families (34 percent of high-risk and 24 percent of low-risk blacks respectively). Conversely,

black women from low social capital backgrounds were most likely to transition to marriage after a first birth. Slightly more than half of low-risk blacks from low social capital families married after their first birth; forty-three percent of high risk blacks from families with low educational investments did so.

In summary, educational investments showed a strong impact on second transitions among blacks, particularly for those whose first transition was birth. Black women who first experienced a birth were overwhelmingly more likely to finish high school if they came from families with high educational investments. This pattern emerged for low-risk and high-risk black women who first gave birth. The effect of social capital on second event transitions was also clear among blacks who first completed high school; social capital, in particular, influenced the transition to work after school completion among black women.

In general, racial distinctions in the patterns of second event transitions emerged, and social capital demonstrated sizeable but different effects on the second events we observed. Among whites, social capital had no moderating effect on the conditional sequencing of the first two life events among those who completed high school first -- most married following high school completion, regardless of risk status or social capital, and a sizeable proportion entered the labor force as their next transition. Among whites who married first, most were likely to begin childbearing after marriage. One exception was observed among high risk whites from families with high educational investments, where the likelihood of high school completion after marriage was also high.

Family investments showed strong moderating effects on the life trajectories of black women. Blacks from low and high risk backgrounds, who had a first transition of motherhood, were most likely to complete high school after childbirth. Black women who completed school first, and who were from families with high educational investments, were most likely to make the transition to the labor force.

In summary, the patterns observed from the conditional sequencing analysis suggest that social capital contributes to the type of life trajectories women follow. Social capital influences the initial life transitions, and appears to help minimize negative impacts of initial missteps in the life course, particularly for black women.

CONCLUSIONS

Our study explores Coleman's idea of social capital to determine if family investments affect the temporal order of life events among disadvantaged young women. A good proportion of our sample, especially black women, were from economically disadvantaged families. Many were from single-parent homes where parents had little education, low family income, and communities with high unemployment or modest opportunities for education or professional development.

We observed race differences in the temporal order of life events among our sample, although risk status demonstrated little impact on the dominant order of events, with the exception of an impact on the transition to the first event. Life trajectories for whites are characterized by: 1) an initial transition to school completion followed by marriage, with an equal probability for work and childbearing after marriage, and; 2) school completion followed by work, marriage, and childbearing. Marriage typically precedes a birth in the temporal order of event transitions. Black women, however, are less likely than whites to complete school first, and more likely to experience a first birth prior to school, marriage or work. Risk status demonstrated little impact on the temporal order of life events, with the exception of the transition to the first event. Disadvantaged women, irrespective of race, were less likely to complete high school as their first event. High risk blacks were more likely to experience a birth first, and high risk whites were more likely to marry first than their respective low-risk counterparts.

Family investments did influence the conditional sequencing of life events, at least for the first two life events we observed. In fact, social capital may be helpful for women who experience "missteps" in the life course. That is, social capital may help women eventually complete school and secure stable employment if they have experienced other events (birth or marriage) prior to completing school or entering the labor force. In particular, family investments increased the likelihood of school completion as the second event among women who did not complete school first -- whites who married first and blacks who become mothers first. Its impact was particularly strong among blacks who gave birth first, irrespective of risk status.

Two additional comments concerning the findings of our study should be noted. First, racial differences in the temporal order of life events have strong implications for life course theory and the notion of disorder in the life course. Our work confirms that of others (Marini, 1978; Rindfuss, Swicegood, Rosenfeld, 1987) which show variability in the life trajectories of young adults. Given that "disorder" is quite common, perhaps it is more fruitful to examine which particular sequence of events are most dominant, and how these patterns may be different for across various population subgroups, and what contributes to the patterns that are observed. Our data also suggest that continued investigation of a "culturally" determined sequence of life events is warranted, but that studies should seek to illustrate whether women experiencing this culturally normative pattern ultimately secure positive life attainments, and if so, what factors contribute to their successful life transitions.

Second, we observed a selective impact of social capital on normative order of life outcomes we examined. Our data demonstrated a clear impact on an initial transition to education and birth, with little impact on labor force attachment and marriage. This may reflect the fact that there are several dimensions of our family-based social capital construct, and several dimensions of social capital in general, one of which includes a family-based domain. These different domains of social capital may influence the propensity for specific life trajectories. This being the case, it is logical that our family-based measure of social capital, which focuses on investments in children's educational attainments that are available in the NLSYW, would strongly influence high school completion or other outcomes strongly linked with educational attainment, such as a first birth.

Furstenberg and Harris (1993) also suggest that social capital may be multidimensional in nature. In their study of social capital and successful development among "at-risk" African American youth, they find that many of their indicators of social capital were more strongly correlated with life outcomes than others. However, in contrast to our findings, almost none of their items were strongly or consistently associated with teen motherhood. Their measures were also not strongly or consistently associated with young men being seriously involved with the law. It is clear, then, that further exploration of the multiple aspects of social capital -- community-based investments, school investments, or other types of family investments -- are needed to ascertain how social capital

should be operationalized and to tease apart the varied impacts of our family-based social capital measures.

Although our study suggests that social capital makes a solid contribution to life outcomes, we must acknowledge the limitations of our work and the data upon which is based. First, our analysis is purely descriptive, and our findings, therefore, should be viewed as preliminary. Although we did control for race and background financial status, we cannot make any claims as to the impact of social capital in the presence of other community, school, or individual characteristics. We cannot claim as well that the influence of social capital on the sequence of life events would hold under more sophisticated proportional hazard techniques. Thus, any firm conclusions about the impact of social capital and the transition to adulthood should be confirmed by a more rigorous multivariate or event-history analysis.

Second, although our sample of young women are taken from the NLSYW, a nationally representative data set of young women, the NLSYW data base has some limitations. For example, there is a small number of items that can serve as good proxies for social capital. Although items, other than our family-based measure, are available, including school-based and community-based variables, they are of limited quality because they tap superficial levels of investment or contain large proportions of missing data. Further, our measure of social capital does not capture the process through which priorities for education are transmitted. We can only assume that families with high aspirations or with encouragement for educational advancement somehow demonstrate those values through various types of communication, activities, teachings or sanctions. Our measure does not tap the family context through which those values may be transmitted.

Despite these limitations, it appears that social capital appears to facilitate the transition to adulthood among young women, even women who are socioeconomically disadvantaged. Follow-up multivariate analyses and explorations of the multidimensionality of social capital as it contributes to the development of young people are warranted.

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Table 1: Distribution of Family Background, Local Environment Characteristics, Composite Risk and Social Capital Measures, 14-16 Year Old Females By Race, Weighted

	Whites (N=768)		Blacks (N=314)
Family Characteristics			
Average Net Family Income	$35,786	***	$15,908
Average Family Size	5.4	***	7.2
Average Per Capita Income	$7,208	***	$2,629
Percent Below Poverty	12.3	***	62.4
Percent Living in Single Parent Family	8.9	***	28.2
Percent with Parental Education 13+ Years	29.3	***	5.5
Average Mother's Education in Years	11.2	***	9.3
Local Environment Characteristics			
Percent Living in a Large City	19.4	***	33.7
Percent with Low Demand for Female Labor	30.9	ns	26.9
Percent with Unemployment Rate 6%+	8.4	***	21.5
Percent with 2 or 4 Year Accredited College	70.5	ns	78.1
Individual Risk Items			
Parental Education < 12 Years	25.2	***	74.0
Single Parent Family	8.9	***	28.2
Mother Unemployed	55.4	ns	56.7
Number of Siblings > 3	33.8	***	72.2
Parental Occupation Unskilled	26.9	***	66.5
Low Index of Opportunity	16.5	**	27.8
Summary Risk Measure			
Mean (s.d.)	1.6 (1.1)	***	2.9 (1.2)
% High Risk (3+ Individual Risk Items)	21.2	***	68.8
Individual Social Capital Items			
Parent's Education Goal at Least College	54.7	ns	52.2
A Lot of Encouragement from Mother or Teacher	70.9	ns	66.5
Three Reading Items Available in the Home	66.7	***	21.2
Composite Social Capital Measure			
Mean (s.d.)	1.9 (1.0)	***	1.3 (.98)
% High Social Capital (2+ individual social capital items)	64.4	***	46.3

*** $p<0.001$
** $p<0.01$
* $p<0.05$

Source: Child Trends, Inc. tabulations of the National Longitudinal Survey of Young Women, 1968-1988 Waves, White and Black Females 14-16 Years of Age in 1968.

Note: Table values (except Ns) are based on weighted data.

Table 2: Subsequent Transitions Among Women Completing High School and Entering the Labor Force First by Transition Number and Type of Transition, All Women and by Race

Transition Number and Type	All Women (N=1,082)	Whites (N= 768)	Blacks (N= 314)
First Transition			
High School	**80.4 (808)**	**83.9 (633)**	**53.2 (175)**
Work	2.6 (29)	2.5 (19)	3.4 (10)
Birth			**9 (89)**
Marriage			5 (40)
Total			100.0
Second Transition			
First Transition School:			
Birth			**.9 (53)**
Work			**).1 (64)**
Marriage			**1.9 (56)**
No 2nd transition			1.1 (2)
First Transition Work:			
School			34.6 (1)
Birth			26.9 (4)
Marriage			23.1 (3)
No 2nd transition			15.4 (2)
Third Transition			
First school, second birth			
Marriage	56.3 (32)	65.5 (8)	48.5 (24)
Work	34.8 (27)	25.1 (3)	43.0 (24)
No 3rd Transition	8.9 (6)	9.4 (1)	8.4 (5)
First school, second marriage			
Birth	**50.2 (216)**	**49.6 (178)**	**64.2 (38)**
Work	**49.9 (199)**	**50.0 (181)**	**35.8 (18)**
No 3rd Transition	0.4 (2)	0.4(2)	------- (0)
First school, second work			
Birth	4.7 (23)	2.9 (7)	28.3 (16)
Marriage	**68.8 (208)**	**72.5 (181)**	**34.2 (27)**
No 3rd Transition	26.4 (92)	25.6 (71)	**37.4 (21)**

Source: Child Trends, Inc. Tabulations of the National Longitudinal Survey of Young Women, 1968-1988 Waves, White and Black Females 14-16 Years of Age in 1968.

Note: Table values (except Ns) are based on weighted data.

Table 2: Subsequent Transitions Among Women Completing High School and Entering the Labor Force First by Transition Number and Type of Transition, All Women and by Race

Transition Number and Type	All Women (N=1,082)	Whites (N= 768)	Blacks (N= 314)
Third Transition (Cont'd)			
First work, second school			
Birth	------- (0)	-------- (0)	------- (0)
Marriage	83.2 (6)	100.0 (6)	------- (0)
No 3rd Transition	16.8 (1)	------- (0)	100.0 (1)
First work, second birth			
Marriage	13.8 (1)	------ (0)	28.6 (1)
School	----- (0)	------ (0)	------ (0)
No 3rd Transition	86.2 (4)	100.0 (1)	71.4 (3)
First work, second marriage			
School	22.4 (1)	26.3 (1)	---- (0)
Birth	68.6 (4)	73.7 (3)	38.6 (1)
No 3rd Transition	9.0 (2)	---- (0)	61.4 (2)
Fourth Transition			
First school, second work, third birth			
Marriage	41.0 (9)	43.4 (4)	20.1 (5)
No 4th Transition	59.0 (14)	56.6 (3)	79.9 (11)
First school, second work, third marriage			
Birth	**71.7 (150)**	**71.5 (130)**	**76.4 (20)**
No 4th Transition	28.3 (58)	28.5 (51)	23.6 (7)
First school, second birth, third marriage			
Work	69.4 (24)	73.2 (6)	65.1 (18)
No 4th Transition	30.6 (8)	26.8 (2)	34.9 (6)
First school, second birth, third work			
Marriage	22.5 (8)	----- (0)	33.7 (8)
No 4th Transition	77.5 (19)	100.0 (3)	66.3 (16)
First school, second marriage, third birth			
Work	**70.7 (155)**	**69.6 (122)**	**89.8 (33)**
No 4th Transition	29.3 (61)	30.4 (56)	10.2 (5)
First school, second marriage, third work			
Birth	**72.7 (146)**	**72.8 (132)**	68.7 (14)
No 4th Transition	27.3 (53)	27.2 (49)	31.3 (4)

Source: Child Trends, Inc. Tabulations of the National Longitudinal Survey of Young Women, 1968-1988 Waves, White and Black Females 14-16 Years of Age in 1968.

Note: Table values (except Ns) are based on weighted data.

Table 2: Subsequent Transitions Among Women Completing High School and Entering the Labor Force First by Transition Number and Type of Transition, All Women and by Race

Transition Number and Type	All Women (N=1,082)	Whites (N= 768)	Blacks (N= 314)
Fourth Transition (Contd)			
First work, second school, third birth			
Marriage	------- (0)	------- (0)	------- (0)
No 4th Transition	------- (0)	------- (0)	------- (0)
First work, second school, third marriage			
Birth	100.0 (6)	100.0 (6)	------- (0)
No 4th Transition	------- (0)	------- (0)	------- (0)
First work, second birth, third marriage			
School	------- (0)	------- (0)	------- (0)
No 4th Transition	100.0 (1)	------- (0)	100.0 (1)
First work, second birth, third school			
Marriage	------- (0)	------- (0)	------- (0)
No 4th Transition	------- (0)	------- (0)	------- (0)
First work, second marriage, third birth			
School	73.7 (3)	71.3 (2)	100.0 (1)
No 4th Transition	26.3 (1)	28.7 (1)	------- (0)
First work, second marriage, third school			
Birth	100.0 (1)	100.0 (1)	------- (0)
No 4th Transition	------- (0)	------- (0)	------- (0)

Source: Child Trends, Inc. Tabulations of the National Longitudinal Survey of Young Women, 1968-1988 Waves, White and Black Females 14-16 Years of Age in 1968.

Note: Table values (except Ns) are based on weighted data.

Table 3: Subsequent Transitions Among Women Giving Birth and Getting Married First By Transition Number and Type of Transition, All Women and by Race

Transition Number and Type	All women (N=1,082)	Whites (N= 768)	Blacks (N= 314)
First Transition			
High School	**80.4 (808)**	**83.9 (633)**	**53.2 (175)**
Work	2.6 (29)	2.5 (19)	3.4 (10)
Birth	5.9 (107)	2.5 (18)	**31.9 (89)**
Marriage	11.1 (138)	11.1 (98)	11.5 (40)
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0
Second Transition			
First Transition Birth:			
School	**40.4 (42)**	28.9 (5)	**47.5 (37)**
Work	13.5 (14)	11.9 (2)	14.4 (12)
Marriage	**42.2 (47)**	53.6 (10)	**35.1 (37)**
No 2nd transition	3.9 (4)	5.6 (1)	2.9 (3)
First Transition Marriage:			
School	**25.3 (32)**	**26.7 (26)**	14.9 (6)
Work	7.5 (12)	7.6 (8)	8.6 (4)
Birth	**66.8 (92)**	**65.7 (63)**	**74.5 (29)**
No 2nd transition	0.5 (2)	0.3 (1)	2.0 (1)
Third Transition			
First birth, second marriage			
School	30.4 (15)	21.6 (2)	**38.8 (13)**
Work	40.9 (19)	41.6 (4)	**40.2 (15)**
No 3rd Transition	28.7 (13)	36.7 (4)	21.1 (9)
First birth, second school			
Marriage	63.1 (21)	83.3 (5)	**55.5 (17)**
Work	26.6 (16)	16.7 (1)	**30.3 (15)**
No 3rd Transition	10.3 (5)	----- (0)	14.1 (5)
First birth, second work			
School	3.7 (1)	------- (0)	5.5 (1)
Marriage	45.5 (5)	100.0 (2)	17.5 (3)
No 3rd Transition	50.8 (8)	------- (0)	76.9 (8)

Source: Child Trends, Inc. tabulations of the National Longitudinal Survey of Young Women, 1968-1988 Waves, White and black Females 14-16 Year of Age in 1968.

Note: Table values (except Ns) are based on weighted data.

Table 3: Subsequent Transitions Among Women Giving Birth and Getting Married First By Transition Number and Type of Transition, All Women and by Race

Transition Number and Type	All women (N=1,082)	Whites (N= 768)	Blacks (N= 314)
Third Transition (Cont'd)			
First marriage, second birth			
Work	48.8 (43)	**48.0 (30)**	**54.2 (13)**
School	31.8 (28)	18.8 (20)	23.2 (8)
No 3rd Transition	19.3 (21)	18.8 (13)	22.6 (8)
First marriage, second school			
Birth	64.8 (22)	**63.4 (17)**	83.5 (5)
Work	31.3 (9)	32. 4 (8)	16.5 (1)
No 3rd Transition	3.9 (1)	4.2 (1)	----- (0)
First marriage, second work			
Birth	40.0 (5)	41.4 (4)	30.8 (1)
School	19.4 (2)	19.4 (1)	19.4 (1)
No 3rd Transition	40.6 (5)	39.2 (3)	49.7 (2)
Fourth Transition			
First birth, second marriage, third school			
Work	44.1 (8)	----- (0)	67.5 (8)
No 4th Transition	55.9 (7)	100.0 (2)	32.5 (5)
First birth, second marriage, third work			
School	28.3 (6)	27.2 (1)	29.3 (5)
No 4th Transition	71.7 (13)	72.8 (3)	70.7 (10)
First birth, second school, third work			
Marriage	32.6 (7)	----- (0)	39.4 (7)
No 4th Transition	67.4 (9)	100.0 (1)	60.6 (8)
First birth, second school, third marriage			
Work	77.0 (17)	73.3 (3)	78.6 (14)
No 4th Transition	23.0 (4)	25.7 (1)	21.4 (3)
First birth, second work, third marriage			
School	7.0 (1)	----- (0)	27.6 (1)
No 4th Transition	93.0 (4)	100.0 (2)	72.4 (2)
First birth, second work, third school			
Marriage	----- (0)	------- (0)	----- (0)
No 4th Transition	100.0 (1)	------- (0)	100.0 (1)

Source: Child Trends, Inc. tabulations of the National Longitudinal Survey of Young Women, 1968-1988 Waves, White and black Females 14-16 Year of Age in 1968.

Note: Table values (except Ns) are based on weighted data.

Table 3: Subsequent Transitions Among Women Giving Birth and Getting Married First By Transition Number and Type of Transition, All Women and by Race

Transition Number and Type	All women (N=1,082)	Whites (N= 768)	Blacks (N= 314)
Fourth Transition (Cont'd)			
First marriage, second school, third birth			
Work	76.4 (18)	75.9 (14)	81.2 (4)
No 4th Transition	23.6 (4)	24.1 (3)	18.8 (1)
First marriage, second school, third work			
Birth	81.9 (7)	85.0 (7)	----- (0)
No 4th Transition	18.1 (2)	15.0 (1)	100.0 (1)
First marriage, second birth, third work			
School	24.5 (11)	22.5 (7)	35.7 (4)
No 4th Transition	75.5 (32)	77.5 (23)	64.3 (9)
First marriage, second birth, third school			
Work	67.6 (18)	66.8 (12)	74.2 (6)
No 4th Transition	32.4 (10)	33.2 (8)	25.8 (2)
First marriage, second work, third birth			
School	39.9 (1)	44.6 (1)	----- (0)
No 4th Transition	60.1 (4)	55.4 (3)	100.0 (1)
First marriage, second work, third school			
Birth	100.0 (2)	100.0 (1)	100.0 (1)
No 4th Transition	----- (0)	----- (0)	----- (0)

Source: Child Trends, Inc. tabulations of the National Longitudinal Survey of Young Women, 1968-1988 Waves, White and black Females 14-16 Year of Age in 1968.

Note: Table values (except Ns) are based on weighted data.

Table 4: Distribution of First Transitions and Subsequent Nonfamily and Family Transitions Among White 14-16 Year Olds Who Completed High School First and Black 14-16 Year Olds Who Completed School or Experienced a Birth First, by Risk Status, Weighted

	Whites				
	Low Risk			High Risk	
	%	(N)	χ^2	%	(N)
First Transition:					
High School	87.9	516	38.6***	69.6	116
Work	2.1	12		4.0	7
Birth	1.4	8		6.7	10
Marriage	8.6	56		19.7	41
Total	78.8	592		21.2	174
Second Transition:					
Completed School First					
Marriage	56.3	294	ns	57.5	66
Work	42.0	213		39.2	46
Birth	1.6	8		3.3	4
Total	100.0	516		100.0	116

*** p<0.001
** p<0.01
* p<0.05

Source: Child Trends, Inc. tabulations of the National Longitudinal Survey of Young Women, 1968-1988 Waves, White and Black Females 14-16 Years of Age in 1968.

Note: Tables values (except Ns) are based on weighted data.

Table 4: Distribution of First Transitions and Subsequent Nonfamily and Family Transitions Among White 14-16 Year Olds Who Completed High School First and Black 14-16 Year Olds Who Completed School or Experienced a Birth First, by Risk Status, Weighted

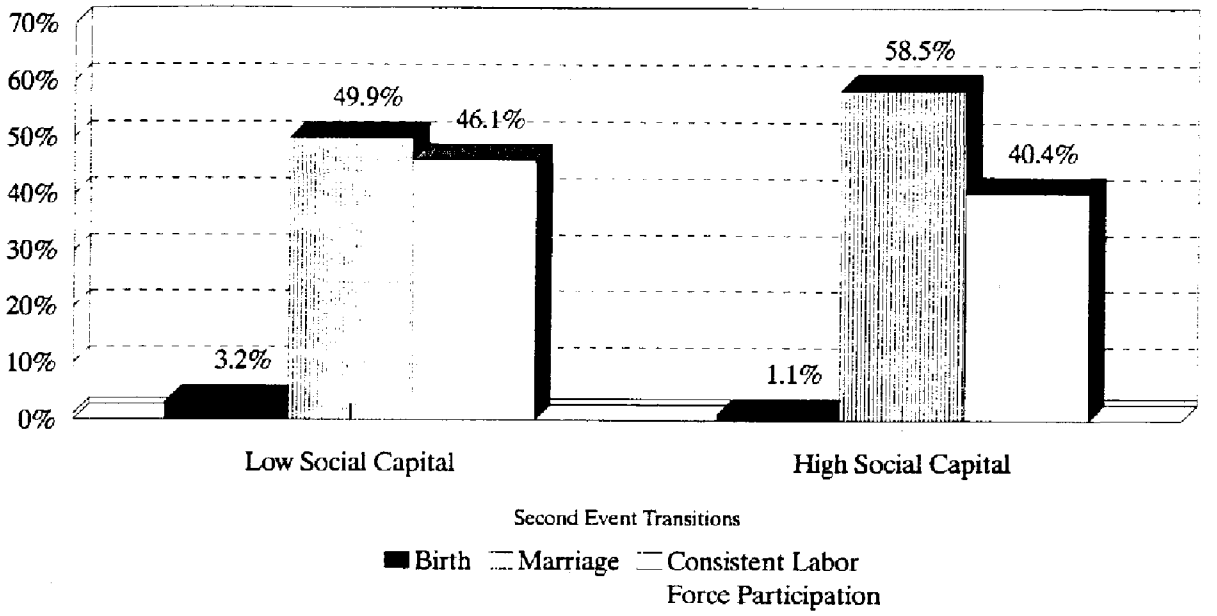
	Blacks				
	Low Risk			High Risk	
	%	(N)	χ^2	%	(N)
First Transition:					
High School	61.6	63	13.4**	49.6	106
Work	1.6	2		4.4	8
Birth	19.1	18		36.8	65
Marriage	17.7	15		9.2	25
Total	32.5	98		67.5	204
Second Transition:					
Completed School First					
Marriage	33.7	21	ns	33.0	35
Birth	24.6	17		29.2	33
Work	41.7	25		37.8	36
Total	100.0	63		100.0	106
Experienced a Birth First					
School	65.4	10	ns	46.4	25
Marriage	30.5	6		36.4	28
Work	4.1	2		17.2	12
Total	100.0	18		100.0	65

*** p<0.001
** p<0.01
* p<0.05

Source: Child Trends, Inc. tabulations of the National Longitudinal Survey of Young Women, 1968-1988 Waves, White and Black Females 14-16 Years of Age in 1968.

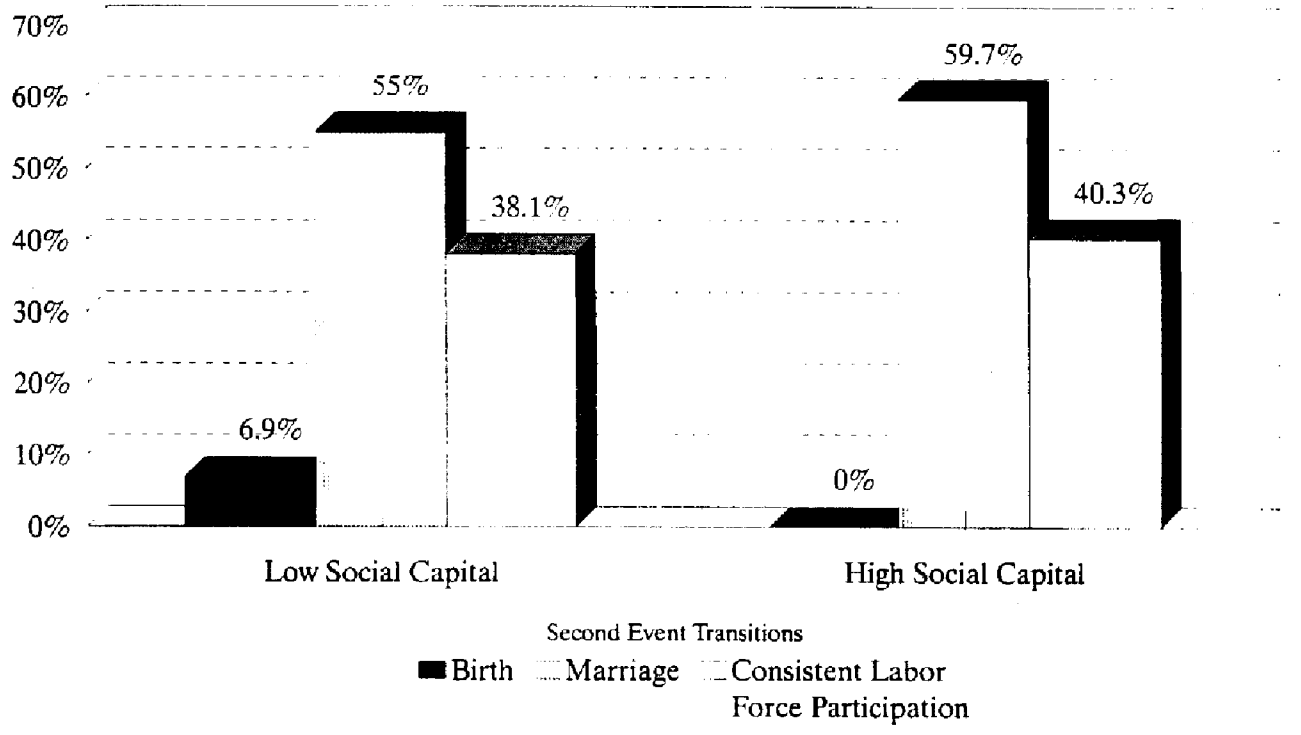
Note: Tables values (except Ns) are based on weighted data.

Figure 1:
Percent Distribution of Second Event Transitions by Social Capital Among Low-Risk White Women 14-16 Years Old Who Completed High School First



Weighted Percentages
Child Trends, Inc., tabulations of the National Longitudinal Survey of Young Women, 1968-1988, White and Black women 14-16 years of age.

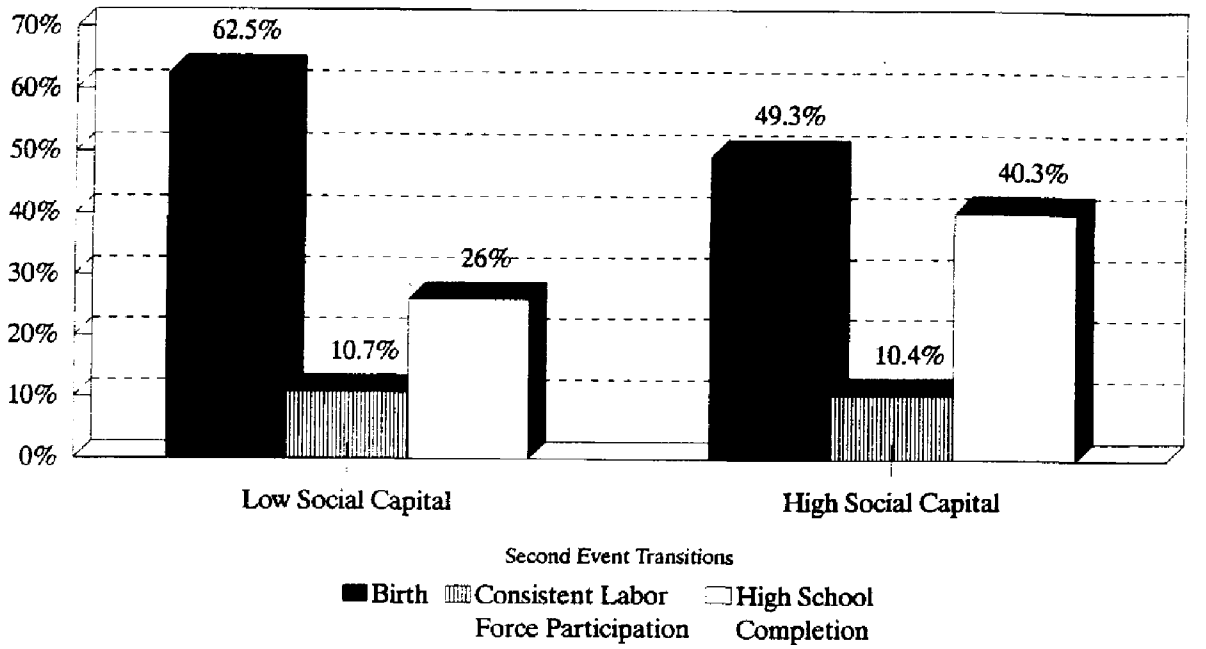
Figure 2:
Percent Distribution of Second Event Transitions by Social Capital Among High-Risk White Women 14-16 Years Old Who Completed High School First



Weighted Percentages
Child Trends, Inc., tabulations of the National Longitudinal Survey of Young Women, 1968-1988, White and Black women 14-16 years of age.

Figure 3:

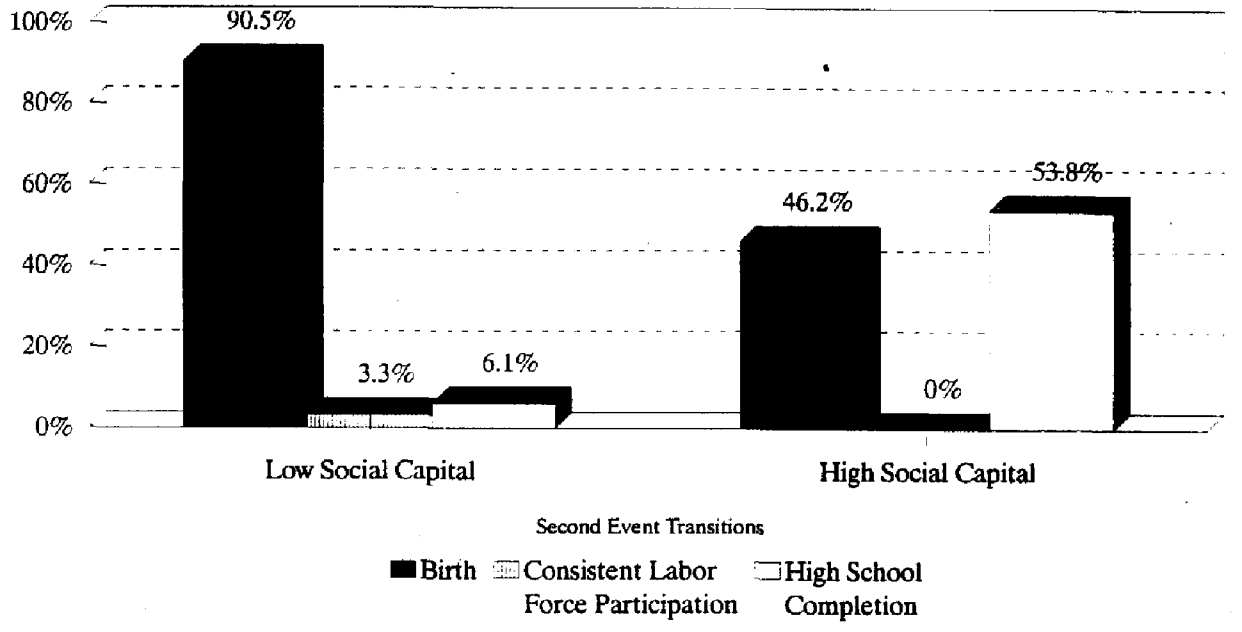
Percent Distributions of Second Event Transitions by Social Capital Among Low-Risk White Women 14-16 Years Old Who Experienced Marriage First



Weighted Percentages
Child Trends, Inc., tabulations of the National Longitudinal Survey of Young Women, 1968-1988, White and Black women 14-16 years of age.

Figure 4:

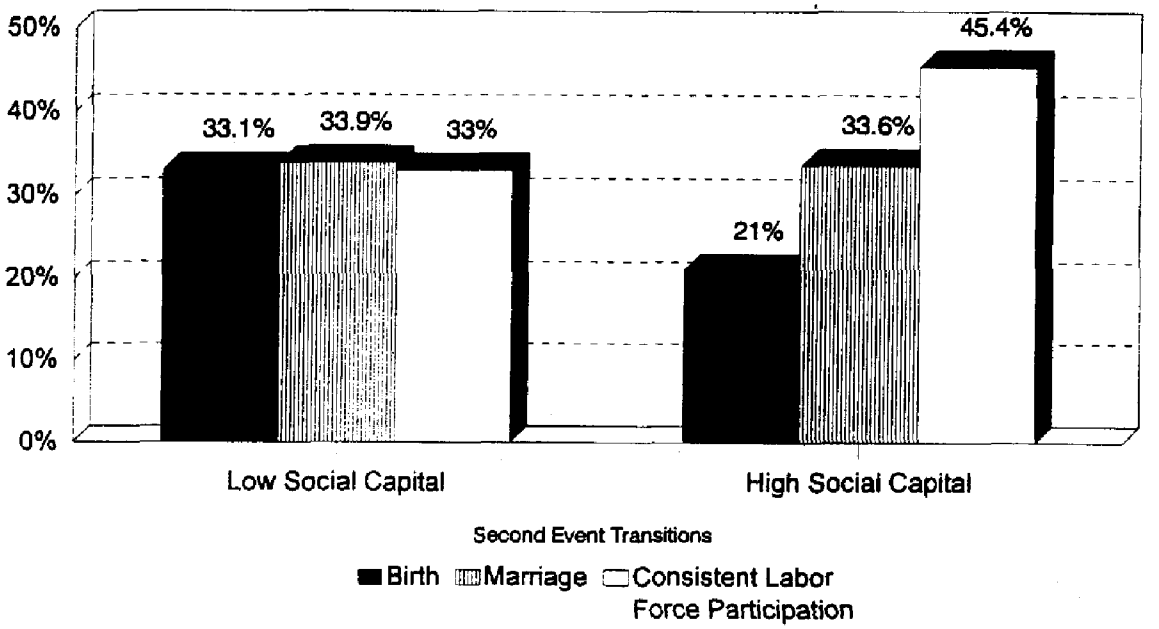
Percent Distributions of Second Event Transitions by Social Capital Among High-Risk White Women 14-16 Years Old Who Experienced Marriage First



Weighted Percentages
Child Trends, Inc., tabulations of the National Longitudinal Survey of Young Women, 1968-1988, White and Black women 14-16 years of age.

Figure 5:

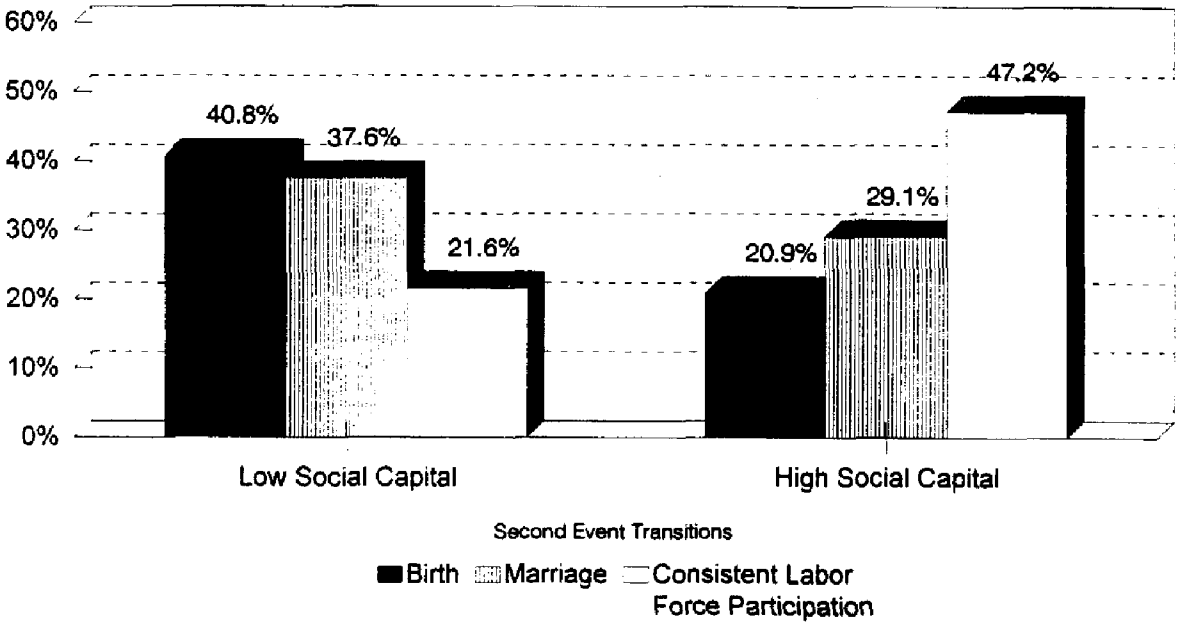
Percent Distribution of Second Event Transitions by Social Capital Among Low-Risk Black Women 14-16 Years Old Who Completed High School First



Weighted Percentages
Child Trends, Inc., tabulations of the National Longitudinal Survey of Young Women, 1968-1988, White and Black women 14-16 years of age.

Figure 6:

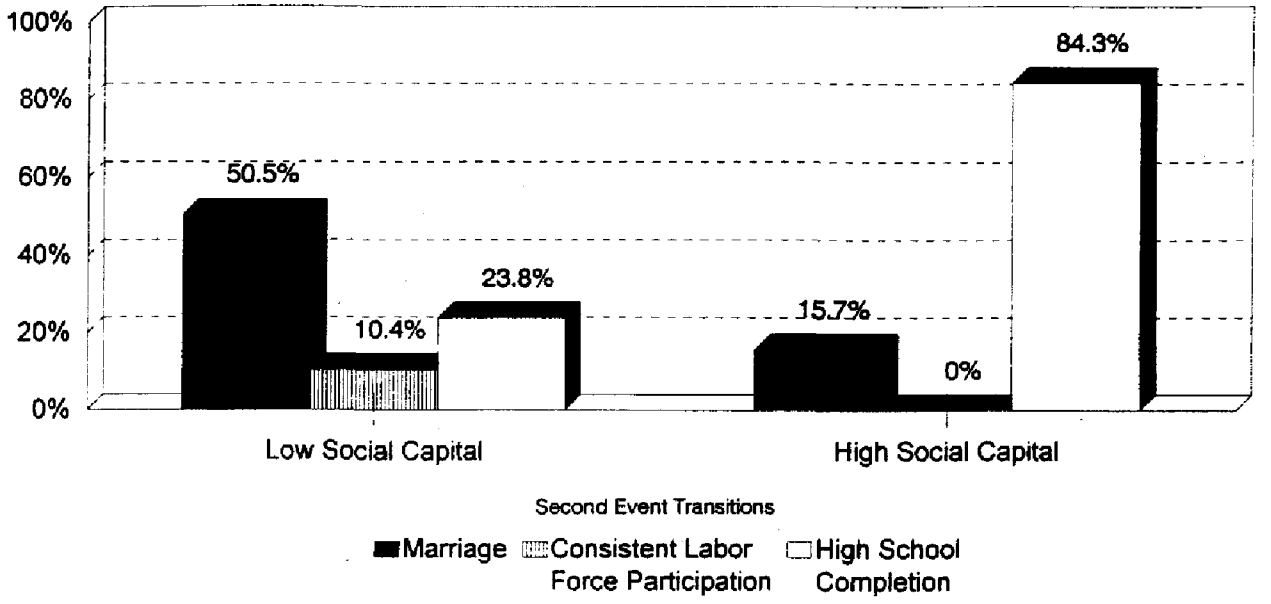
Percent Distribution of Second Event Transitions by Social Capital Among High-Risk Black Women 14-16 Years Old Who Completed High School First



Weighted Percentages
Child Trends, Inc., tabulations of the National Longitudinal Survey of Young Women, 1968-1988, White and Black women 14-16 years of age.

Figure 7:

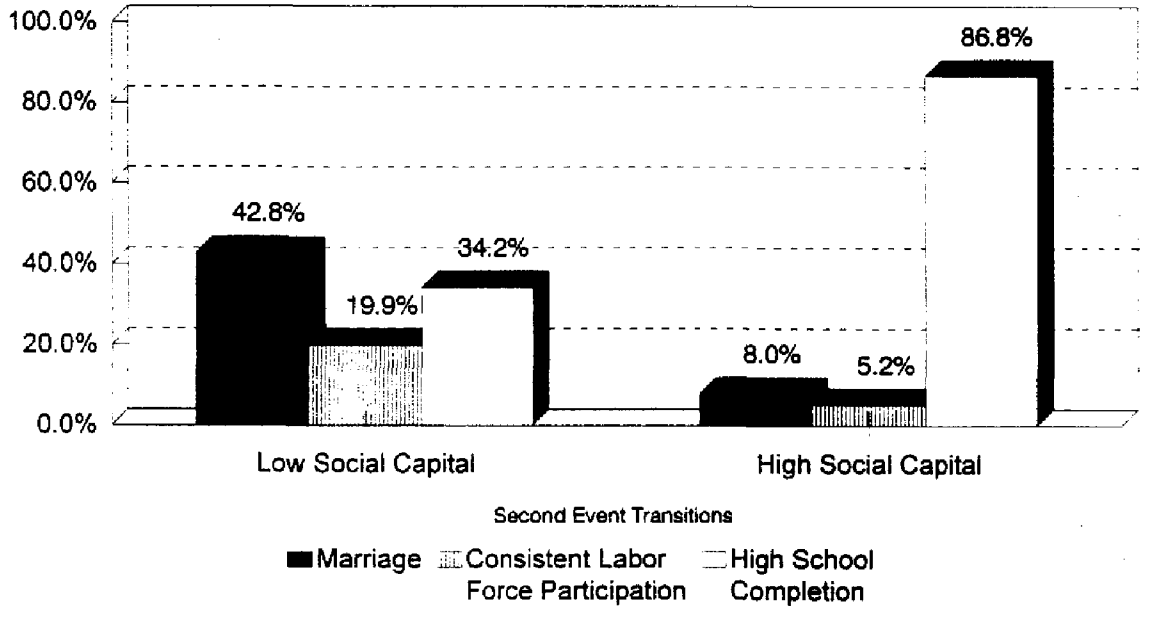
Percent Distributions of Second Event Transitions by Social Capital Among Low-Risk Black Women 14-16 Years Old Who Experienced A Birth First



Weighted Percentages
Child Trends, Inc., tabulations of the National Longitudinal Survey of Young Women, 1968-1988, White and Black Women, 14-16 years of age.

Figure 8:

Percent Distributions of Second Event Transitions by Social Capital Among High-Risk Black Women 14-16 Years Old Who Experienced A Birth First



Weighted Percentages
Child Trends, Inc., tabulations of the National Longitudinal Survey of Young Women, 1968-1988, White and Black women 14-16 years of age.

Appendix
Operational Definition of Variables

VARIABLE	DEFINITION
SOCIAL CAPITAL	
Parent's educational goal for youth	When you were 14 years old, how much education did your parents want you to get? 0=high school or less; 1=college
Magazines	Did you or your parents regularly get any magazines when you were about 14 years old?
Newspapers	Did you or your parents regularly get a newspaper when you were about 14 years old?
Library Card	Did you or your parents have a library card when you were about 14 years old?
	This variable = 1 if R said yes to magagzines, newspapers, and library card (about 50% of sample had all 3); = 0 if less than 3 of these
Encouragement from mother to continue beyond high school	How much encouragement has (did) your mother given (give) you to continue your education beyond high school? (much, some, or none)
Encouragement from teacher to continue beyond high school	How much encouragement have (did) your teachers and other adults in your high school given (give) you to continue your education beyond high school? (much, some, or none)
Encouragement from mother and/or teacher to continue beyond high school	This variable = 1 if teacher or mother gave "much" encouragment; = 0 if teacher **and** mother gave" some" or "none"
Summary Social Capital Measure **2+ individual items="high social capital"**	Summary measure of three individual social capital items described above 1) parents educational goals for respondent to go beyond high school; 2) availability of reading materials in house at age 14; 3) received encouragement from mother and/or teacher to continue education beyond high school. Total score of 2 or more of these items coded as "1" for high social capital; total score of <=1 coded as "0" for low social capital.
RISK	
Family structure	Youth lived in a single parent family at age 14
Number of siblings	A household roster is used to determine the number of siblings living in the household in 1968 (1 = 4 or more; 0 = 0 through 3 siblings)
Mother's employment status	Did your mother work for pay when you were 14 years old? (1 = no; 0 = yes)
Education of most educated parent	What was the highest grade (or year) of regular school your mother ever attended? What was the highest grade (or year) of regular school your father ever attended? (use higher of the two: 1 = <12; 0 = 12 or higher)
Parental Occupation	Occupation of the head of the household skilled or unskilled (1 = unskilled; 0 = skilled)
Low opporunity for educational or prfessional development	An index created based on 3 items: 1) unemployment rate is 5% or more in 1968; 2) demand for female labor is low in 1968; 3) there was no 2 or 4 year accredited college in 1968. If 2 or more of these risks are present, index = 1; if 0 or 1 is present, index = 0.
Summary Risk Measure **3+ individual items="high risk"**	Summary measure of six individual risk items: 1) Family structure 2) Number of siblings, 3) Mother's employment status 4) Education of most educated parent 5) Parental occupation 6) Low opportunity for educational or professional development . Individual items coded as "1" if risk present, "0" if absent. Items are added together for a total risk score. Risk score of 3+ = 1 for "high risk", score of 2 or less = 0 for "low risk".

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