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GETTING STARTED

URBAN YOUTH
in the
LABOR MARKET



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GETTING STARTED: URBAN YOUTH IN THE LABOR MARKET

by

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Letter of Transmittal

WORK PROJECTS ADMINISTRATION,
Washington, D. C., December 1, 1941.

SIR: I have the honor to transmit herewith a report on the experiences of urban youth who became members of the Nation's labor force during the depression.

Unemployment has affected a larger proportion of workers under 25 than of any other age group in the population. The youngest workers (those under 20) are especially subject to unemployment, and are likewise among the lowest paid when they can find work. Problems of choosing a vocation, getting an education, "getting started" in work, and earning adequate wages all existed before the depression, but they became greatly aggravated when economic opportunities for youth narrowed after 1929.

Faced with a major problem of unemployment and economic distress among its young citizens, the Federal Government undertook emergency work programs to meet the special needs of jobless youth. Under the Work Projects Administration, the National Youth Administration, and the Civilian Conservation Corps, thousands of youth who would otherwise have been unemployed were helped to gain valuable work experience, continue their educations, and maintain themselves until they could find private jobs.

The efficient operation of large-scale emergency work programs depends in no small part upon having adequate information about the characteristics of the groups dealt with, the problems they face, and the ways in which their successful adjustment may be achieved. In view of the common interest of the Work Projects Administration and the National Youth Administration in aiding unemployed youth and preparing them for absorption into jobs, the WPA Division of Research undertook a survey of urban youth in the labor market jointly sponsored by the two agencies. The results of that survey¹ are presented in this report.

The survey gives particular attention to an important but hitherto almost neglected aspect of youth's experiences in the labor market,

¹ Conducted in July 1938 in the following seven cities: Binghamton, N. Y.; Birmingham, Ala.; Denver, Colo.; Duluth, Minn.; St. Louis, Mo.; San Francisco, Calif.; and Seattle, Wash.

namely the process of their transition from wards of society in the schools to self-supporting workers or homemakers. To study this transition process effectively, young persons from the eighth-grade graduating classes of 1929, 1931, and 1933 were selected for investigation, and comprehensive records were obtained of their further school attendance and labor-market activities.

A careful analysis of this transition process is of particular value at the present time, when the Nation is preparing itself for defense against foreign aggression. The entry of youth into the labor market will accelerate rapidly as the defense program gathers momentum and as schedules of munitions production call for increasing numbers of workers. An understanding of the nature and timing of the process by which youth are drawn into productive activity assists materially in the rapid and effective recruitment of labor to meet defense goals.

This study was made under the direction of Howard B. Myers, Director of the Division of Research. The information was collected and analyzed under the supervision of John N. Webb, Chief, Labor Market Research Section. The report was prepared by Albert Westefeld. Special acknowledgment is made to Stanley L. Payne and Selden C. Menefee, who read and criticized the preliminary draft, and to Beatrice H. Mathieson, who assisted in preparing the statistical material.

Respectfully submitted.

HOWARD B. MYERS,
Director of Research.

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**Getting Started:
Urban Youth in the Labor Market**

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INTRODUCTION

THE SPECIAL problems of youth trying to get established in an overcrowded labor market are among the most difficult of those which have grown out of the long depression. Even with the considerable rise in industrial activity that has occurred since the depths of the depression, finding a job still remains the number one economic problem of young people.

It is sometimes pointed out that the obstacles youth face in getting started are not new. Business depression, seasonal fluctuation in the demand for labor, the decline or removal of basic industries in particular communities, difficulties in securing adequate training—all these problems existed before 1929. Likewise, earlier generations had to face the same facts that modern youth have to face: that jobs are hard to find, hard to obtain, and hard to hold.

Undoubtedly, the problems raised by the depression are so vivid in most people's minds that the problems of earlier days are often forgotten. Nevertheless, the great depression has been worse, in both severity and duration, than any the Nation previously experienced. It is therefore not surprising that the economic problems of youth have called forth an exceptional amount of discussion in recent years.

Several factors have been operating to intensify the economic difficulties of present-day youth. One of these is the increased number of "additional workers" in the labor market. In recent years many older workers who would normally retire and many women who would normally withdraw from employment to become homemakers have kept their jobs, either because of low family earnings or because of the unemployment of other members of the family. Likewise, many persons who would ordinarily be nonworkers have sought jobs in this period. The pressure of additional workers in the labor market thus has tended to reduce the number of job openings for young workers.

An additional factor that complicates the problem of unemployment among youth is that the number of persons aged 16-24 is now approaching a peak. This age group will by about 1944 be larger

than at any time in the past, or than it will be again in the predictable future.¹ This condition, which arises from the peak number of births shortly after the World War, means that young people face unusually severe competition for jobs.

With the supply side of the labor market swollen and the demand side contracted, youth have been at a particular disadvantage in getting jobs. Employers naturally give fewer jobs to beginners when a surplus of experienced workers is available. At such times even slight differences in employer preferences may mean the difference between getting and not getting jobs. In fact, young persons are sometimes barred from consideration through standards of hiring that appear designed mainly to simplify the problem of choosing from an overabundance of applicants.

How serious is the unemployment problem among youth? According to preliminary returns of the 1940 Census, an estimated minimum of 2,630,000 youth aged 14 to 24 were seeking work or were engaged in public emergency work during the week of March 24-30, 1940.² Even more striking is the fact that 23 percent of the workers aged 14 to 24 were unemployed, as compared with 11 percent of those aged 25 to 44, and 13 percent of those aged 45 to 64.³

The consequences of widespread unemployment among youth have been pointed out in many quarters. Problems of postponed marriage and excess leisure time, and hardships resulting from low income, have faced many of "the depression's children." It is true that young workers can look forward to jobs with more assurance than older workers, for they grow more employable as time passes. Nevertheless, youth face a special problem of their own—getting a proper start in employment, for their whole future may be endangered by protracted unemployment or work in blind-alley jobs. Young people may have naturally buoyant spirits, but any long-continued frustration of their desire to become self-supporting is likely to have serious consequences.

As a result of general recognition that unemployment among youth is a problem requiring the attention of the Federal Government, special work programs have been inaugurated. The National Youth Administration, Civilian Conservation Corps, and Work Projects Administration (formerly the Works Progress Administration) have helped many thousands of young people tide themselves over

¹ Melvin, Bruce L. and Smith, Elna N., *Rural Youth: Their Situation and Prospects*, Research Monograph XV, Division of Social Research, Works Progress Administration, 1938, Washington, D. C., pp. 2, 137.

² Bureau of the Census, *Preliminary Figures on Employment Status of Persons 14 Years of Age and Over in the United States by Age, Color, and Sex: March 24-30, 1940*, Series P-4, No. 3, Feb. 8, 1941, p. 5. The figures cited are based upon a 5-percent sample of the Census returns.

³ *Ibid.*



U. S. Office of Education.

Future Skilled Worker.

periods of unemployment and acquire training and practical work experience. Lately these agencies have given special attention to the task of helping young workers fit themselves for jobs in defense industries. Thus work programs for youth have played an important part both in meeting their needs and in utilizing their abilities for the strengthening of the Nation.

In order to operate public work programs for youth and to assist their absorption into private employment, it is necessary to have a thorough understanding of such matters as how youth seek jobs, what qualifications they must have, and what difficulties they face in getting jobs. It was to get answers to questions such as these, and to take stock of youth's position in the labor market generally, that the present study was undertaken.

The ready absorption of youth into jobs was taken more or less for granted until the depression, and it is only within the past decade that exact studies of their economic problems have been widely undertaken. These studies have shed much light on youth's employment and unemployment at a given time, but they have made available comparatively little information about the all-important process of youth's transition from school to the job. The present study was designed to supplement the usual static picture of youth's activities at a given time with a dynamic one of the striking changes that occur as young people leave school and grow up in the labor market. By the addition of a time dimension, it was possible in the present study to explore the whole range of youth's experiences as they went through the transition to adult workers.

The data upon which the present inquiry is based were collected during the summer and fall of 1938 in the following seven cities: Binghamton, N. Y.; Birmingham, Ala.; Denver, Colo.; Duluth, Minn.; St. Louis, Mo.; San Francisco, Calif.; and Seattle, Wash. A random sample of more than 30,000 youth who had graduated from the eighth-grade classes⁴ of the public and private schools in 1929, 1931, and 1933 was visited by field interviewers, and complete records of their activities since leaving the eighth grade obtained. The average ages of these three groups of graduates on July 1, 1938 (the date of enumeration), were 19, 21, and 23, respectively.

It is not possible from the seven-city sample employed in this study to generalize concerning the economic situation of youth in the country as a whole. Likewise, although statistical tests indicate that the seven cities in the sample do not differ significantly from all cities in the United States in respect to basic population characteristics, it is

⁴ Independent studies show that only a small proportion of youth leave school before graduating from the eighth grade, so that a follow-up study of eighth-grade graduates adequately represents youth generally. For a further discussion of the sampling technique, see appendix A.

probably unwarranted to claim that the results of the study are descriptive of the economic situation of all urban youth. Nevertheless, the inclusion in the sample of cities that were located in widely separated parts of the country, and that ranged in size from 78,000 (Binghamton) to 816,000 (St. Louis), justifies the view that the findings are broadly descriptive of the economic situation of young people in the larger American cities.⁵

Four reports presenting the results of the survey of youth in the labor market have already been issued. The first, based upon a preliminary count of the schedule returns, summarized briefly youth's experiences in the labor market and their situation at the time of interview.⁶ In the second report, youth whose long periods of unemployment set them apart as an especially disadvantaged group were compared with all youth in the study to see how the groups differed in social-economic characteristics.⁷ The third report presented a general picture of the employment status, occupational distribution, and earnings of youth at the time of interview.⁸ The fourth report dealt with the value of vocational training to young people in the labor market.⁹

The present report considers in detail youth's activities from the time they left the eighth grade (in 1929, 1931, or 1933) until the time of interview (July 1, 1938). Special attention is centered upon the changing nature of their experiences as they went through the various stages of participation in the labor market. Some of the questions considered are when youth left school, how they sought their first jobs, what kinds of jobs they held, how much unemployment they had, and what special difficulties they encountered in obtaining jobs. Also, boys and girls of different social and economic characteristics are compared to discover what groups accomplished the transition to jobs relatively successfully, and what groups were subject to the extremes of unemployment and deprivation that represent the "youth problem" at its worst.

Though a wide variety of topics are investigated in this report, they are all integrated about one of three parallel lines of inquiry. The basic questions around which the discussion revolves are as

⁵ See appendix A.

⁶ *Urban Youth: Their Characteristics and Economic Problems*, Series I, No. 24, Division of Research, Works Progress Administration, Washington, D. C., 1939.

⁷ Payne, Stanley L., *Disadvantaged Youth on the Labor Market*, Series I, No. 25, Division of Research, Work Projects Administration, Federal Works Agency, Washington, D. C., 1940.

⁸ Payne, Stanley L., *Thirty Thousand Urban Youth*, Work Projects Administration, Federal Works Agency, Washington, D. C., 1940.

⁹ Menefee, Selden C., *Vocational Training and Employment of Youth*, Research Monograph XXV, Division of Research, Work Projects Administration, Federal Works Agency, Washington, D. C., 1942.

follows: (1) What are the nature and timing of the stages through which youth pass in their transition from students to productive workers? (2) How successful were youth as a whole in accomplishing the transition? (3) What social and economic factors explain the different degrees of success with which youth underwent the process of transition?

On the basis of this three-way analysis, it will be shown that a majority of youth accomplished the transition to jobs fairly readily. A significant minority, however, underwent long periods of unemployment, or, when they found work, had low earnings. This disadvantaged minority, moreover, represents a problem important considerably beyond the numbers involved, for long unemployment and substandard wages were concentrated in particular groups within the youth population. The assistance of public agencies will continue to be needed if these young people are not to fall by the wayside.

One more word of introduction is needed. The most important social and economic development since this study was undertaken is the embarking of the Nation upon a vast program of military preparedness. This national effort has momentous consequences for youth, but it does not mean that attempts to study youth's absorption into the economic system are obsolete or even temporarily out of place. In the first place, it is by no means certain that youth's economic difficulties are going to be fully solved by expanding employment opportunities in the defense industries and the absorption of multitudes of young men into the armed forces. Unemployment among youth will shrink rapidly as a result of defense activity; with the passage of the emergency, however, it may be expected that the problem of unemployment among youth will recur in aggravated form. Finally, and perhaps most important, national defense itself may be served if more information is obtained about how young people are drawn into productive activity. For all these reasons, it is more rather than less important that facts about youth in the labor market be made available at the present time.

SUMMARY

YOUTH IS preeminently a period of change and adjustment. Among the important transitions boys and girls undergo are those involving their beginning efforts to earn a living—completing their educations and choosing vocations, getting jobs and advancing in them. An adequate idea of youth's absorption into the labor market can be obtained only if their activities are studied as they occurred, in an unfolding time sequence. It is mainly this dynamic aspect of urban youth's economic development that the present survey considers.

LEAVING SCHOOL

Although education is not a key that unlocks all doors, it can be of great assistance to youth in getting ahead in the labor market. The average amount of education of young labor-market entrants was 12.2 years. Thus about one-half of the boys and girls in this survey completed their formal education upon graduation from high school.

The economic condition of their families had much to do with how far youth went in school. Youth whose fathers usually worked in white-collar occupations averaged 12.6 years of schooling, while at the other extreme youth whose fathers usually worked in unskilled occupations averaged 11.7 years. Likewise, 17 percent of white-collar workers' children had some college training, as compared with 4 percent of unskilled workers' children.

Economic conditions also determine to a large degree why youth drop out of school when they do. Nearly half (47 percent) of the youth in this study reported that their principal reason for not continuing their education was financial difficulties. Other major reasons for leaving school were "no desire for further education" (24 percent), and "preferred to work" (11 percent).

ENTERING THE LABOR MARKET

Three-quarters of the youth started to work or seek work directly upon leaving school. It is clear, therefore, that entrance to the labor market is closely related to completion of schooling. This fact is

strikingly shown when school attendance and labor-market participation are charted according to the number of months and years since youth left the eighth grade or according to their successive birthday anniversaries. The number of boys and girls in school dropped sharply at the time of graduation from high school, and likewise in June of each year when school terms ended. About half of the youth first entered the labor market in June. Each drop in school attendance was accompanied by a corresponding rise in labor-market participation. The sudden influx of many new workers also caused peaks of unemployment at the end of school terms.

The average age at which youth first entered the labor market was 18.2 years. Only one-tenth of the youth entered before they were 16, and another one-tenth after they were 20. Youth from low rental areas of the cities entered the labor market earlier, on the average, than youth from high rental areas. The youngest labor-market entrants were far more subject to unemployment than the older groups.

TIME IN THE LABOR MARKET BEFORE FIRST FULL-TIME JOB

Nearly one-half (49 percent) of the youth obtained full-time jobs (of 30 hours or more per week) as soon as they entered the labor market. The other one-half were unemployed or employed part time for some interval before they got full-time jobs. Ten percent of the youth were in the labor market a year or more before they got their first full-time jobs, and another 9 percent had never had full-time jobs up to the time of interview. Youth who spent the longest time in the labor market before getting their first full-time jobs were drawn in high proportion from cities particularly hard hit by the depression (Duluth and Birmingham), from Negroes, from poorer families, and from youth who had low earnings when they finally obtained jobs.

HOW YOUTH LEARNED OF JOBS

The most important way in which youth obtained information about job openings was through friends. This was especially true when they sought their first full-time jobs (31 percent of such jobs were obtained through friends). Other important ways in which youth learned of their first jobs were by personal application (23 percent), through parents (11 percent), and through other relatives (12 percent).

As youth gained work experience, another method of learning of jobs—through former employers—became important. In the case of all full-time jobs after the first, boys and girls relied almost as heavily upon former employers for job contacts (23 percent) as upon friends (25 percent) and personal applications (24 percent). At no time in their experience were many jobs learned of through public or private employment offices, at school, or through want ads.

OCCUPATIONAL CLASSES

In both the earliest and the latest full-time jobs for which information was obtained, young urban workers were primarily represented in two broad groups of occupations, the clerical and the semiskilled. On their first full-time jobs 37 percent of the boys and 53 percent of the girls worked in clerical occupations (including sales as well as office work); and 36 percent of the boys and 22 percent of the girls worked in semiskilled manual occupations. The proportions working in these occupations on their latest full-time jobs¹ were as follows: clerical, boys, 37 percent; clerical, girls, 58 percent; semiskilled, boys, 37 percent; semiskilled, girls, 24 percent.

The next largest group of occupations was the unskilled. The proportions of boys in this field on their first and latest jobs were 19 and 14 percent, respectively; the proportions of girls were 22 and 13 percent. The relative decline in unskilled employment is primarily a reflection of youth's improved position in the labor market as they gained experience.

The proportion of youth in professional, proprietary, managerial, and skilled work was small at all stages of youth's experiences. Such differences as occurred from first to latest jobs were generally in the direction of more skilled and responsible work, however. For example, the proportion of skilled workers rose from 3 to 6 percent.

The concentration of young workers in the occupations of medium difficulty and responsibility is consistent with their average educational attainment of high-school graduation. Youth who had the least education were most likely to obtain jobs in the less skilled manual occupations. Other social and economic differentials likewise had a profound influence on the occupational levels youth reached. For example, 12 percent of the white youth but 67 percent of the Negro youth in Birmingham worked in unskilled occupations on their first full-time jobs; and in St. Louis the corresponding proportions of unskilled workers were 11 percent among whites and 59 percent among Negroes.

INDUSTRIAL GROUPS

As in the case of occupations, two industrial groups were outstanding as sources of employment for urban youth. These were the manufacturing and mechanical industries and wholesale and retail trade. The proportion of boys in manufacturing industries was 36 percent on first full-time jobs and 42 percent on latest full-time jobs; the corresponding proportions for girls were 23 and 27 percent, respectively.

¹ Includes current jobs of youth employed and last jobs of youth unemployed on July 1, 1938.

Trade employed 38 percent of the boys on their first full-time jobs and 35 percent on their latest full-time jobs; it also employed 36 percent of the girls on both first and latest full-time jobs.

The only other industrial group employing any considerable proportion of youth was domestic and personal service in the case of girls. The proportion of girls in this group declined from 27 percent on first full-time jobs to 19 percent on latest full-time jobs. Relatively few youth worked in agriculture or other extractive industries, transportation or communication, public service, or professional service.

EARNINGS

Average (median) weekly earnings on youth's first full-time jobs were \$15.40 for boys and \$12.70 for girls. Because of greater experience and a general rise in occupational level, average weekly earnings rose to \$20 for boys and \$15.30 for girls on jobs held at the time of interview. Average earnings in private industry during the year July 1, 1937–July 1, 1938, were \$907 for boys and \$701 for girls.

Earnings differed markedly according to social-economic status, city, and occupation. White youth in Birmingham averaged \$17.20 per week on current full-time jobs and Negro youth \$8.50; in St. Louis white youth averaged \$16.20 and Negro youth \$11.70. Earnings also were higher the older youth were, and the more education and labor-market experience they had.

Both weekly and annual earnings were highest in San Francisco and Seattle, and lowest in Duluth and Birmingham; with the exception of Duluth (for which data were not available), these cities held the same order in respect to annual real wages as computed from data on cost of living.

As for occupational differences in earnings, the highest weekly wages on current full-time jobs were earned by boys in proprietary or managerial work (\$27.30) and professional work (\$25.60). In the case of girls clerical work paid the highest average weekly wages (\$16) on current full-time jobs. It is particularly noteworthy that boys in skilled occupations had higher average weekly wages (\$23.90) than boys in clerical occupations (\$19.20). This fact suggests that many boys who are inclined to choose white-collar work because of its greater prestige might find it financially advantageous to choose a skilled occupation instead.

AMOUNT OF EMPLOYMENT AND UNEMPLOYMENT

The best picture of youth's employment experiences over a period of time is given by relating the amount of time they were employed or unemployed to the amount of time they spent in the labor market. On this basis the average youth was employed full time during 72

percent of the time he spent in the labor market, and was unemployed 18 percent of the time. The proportion of unemployment was higher for Negroes than for whites, and for youth from low rental areas than for youth from high rental areas.

ACTIVITIES AT TIME OF INTERVIEW

In July 1938, when youth were interviewed for this study, 18 percent of those who had earlier been in the labor market were no longer in the market. Most of the youth who withdrew were housewives.

Of the youth who were still in the labor market in July 1938, 72 percent were employed full time, 9 percent were employed part time, and 19 percent were unemployed. Unemployment was particularly high among recent entrants to the labor market, younger boys and girls, youth with less education, Negroes, and youth from lower social-economic groups. Unemployment was also higher in unskilled and semiskilled occupations, in manufacturing industries, and in domestic and personal service industries.

SPECIAL DIFFICULTIES IN SECURING EMPLOYMENT

Special difficulties in securing employment, over and above those faced by all young job seekers during the depression, were reported by 31 percent of the youth. They cited lack of experience as the principal special difficulty encountered. Inexperience, however, is not only a cause of unemployment but also an effect or symptom of it. With many experienced workers idle during the depression, inexperienced workers were at a relative disadvantage in getting jobs; under conditions of expanding employment, inexperience becomes a much less serious handicap.

The next most important difficulty youth faced was lack of sufficient general or of sufficient specialized education (reported by 8 percent of the youth).

Special difficulties in obtaining jobs (always with emphasis on inexperience) were more frequently reported by girls than by boys, by grade-school and high-school graduates than by college graduates, by youth who left school because of financial difficulties or physical handicaps, by younger and less experienced workers, and by youth from poorer families.

PLANS FOR THE FUTURE

Eighty-one percent of the youth gave definite replies when asked about their plans for the future. The most frequently expressed plans were as follows: to retain or advance in present job (22 percent), to continue education (15 percent), to secure better job (14 percent), to secure employment (9 percent).

Youth employed full time at the time of interview were chiefly concerned about retaining or advancing in their present jobs; youth employed part time were principally concerned about securing better jobs; and unemployed youth were principally concerned about securing employment. Professional persons, proprietors, managers, and officials expressed the greatest satisfaction with their jobs (as shown by a high proportion of plans to retain or advance in their jobs), and laborers and domestic servants the least.

CONCLUSIONS

In their efforts to get a start in the working world, comparatively few youth were either outstandingly successful or outstandingly unsuccessful. Most youth went through some unemployment during the time their experiences in the labor market were studied, but they spent considerably more time in employment. Most youth thus had earnings during the greater part of their time in the labor market, but in a considerable proportion of cases these earnings were inadequate for more than minimum self-support, with little margin available for provision for the future. The general picture is thus one of fair, but only fair, attainment in the labor market.

Averages do not give the whole picture, however. The most successful and the least successful young workers differed widely in personal characteristics and in social and economic background. The youth who were most severely handicapped in the labor market were the youngest, those with the least education, Negro youth, youth from poorer families, and educationally retarded youth.

If success in the labor market is to be more nearly proportional to ability and effort, the effect of social and economic barriers upon economic opportunity must be mitigated. These barriers probably operate least powerfully in times of high economic activity, and certainly economic recovery is the most important condition necessary for a solution of the "youth problem." Additional measures, however, are needed; among these are improved and expanded services to youth in the three related fields of vocational guidance, vocational training, and job placement. In addition, work programs for youth can help to equalize educational opportunity, give youth practical work experience, and furnish at least a stopgap source of income in times of depression. At the present time such work programs perform a further valuable service to the Nation, namely, the training of young workers specifically for places in defense industries. If, as seems likely, economic activity slumps sharply after the defense emergency, public work programs can cushion the shock of unemployment measurably.

Chapter I

FROM SCHOOL TO LABOR MARKET

THE YOUTH group, defined in its broadest sense, includes those persons in the population aged 14 to 25. Within these age limits nearly all young men pass through a transition process from student to worker. Likewise, in the same period of their lives, most young women enter the labor market and then become housewives, become housewives immediately after leaving school (and perhaps enter the labor market later), or remain in the labor market regardless of whether or not they get married.

Whatever the kinds and order of their activities, the labor-market entrants face a critical adjustment period in their lives. How well equipped they are to get jobs, how steadily they are able to remain employed, and what the conditions of their employment are—all of these questions are of vital concern to the youth themselves and to society.

The present chapter is intended to give a bird's-eye view of the entire transition process and, in addition, to trace in some detail the first stage of that process, the shift from school into the labor market.

THE GENERAL PICTURE OF CHANGES IN THE ACTIVITIES OF YOUTH

The general outlines of the transition from student to worker are clearly revealed when an examination is made of the predominant activity of young labor-market entrants¹ each month from the beginning of the year of eighth-grade graduation until the time of interview (July 1938). By this time-series device it is possible to discover what proportion of youth were in school, employed, unemployed, or

¹ This term, as used throughout this report, refers to youth who worked or sought work at some time between leaving school and the date of interview. Of the 30,075 youth enumerated, 25,684 were labor-market entrants.

housewives at any given time during the period studied. Since primary interest in this study is in the activities of youth in the labor market,² the changes in the proportion of the total group engaged in labor-market activities are considered first.

Absorption Into the Labor Market

In discussing entrance into the labor market and activities while in the labor market, a clearer picture is gained if the youth of a single class are followed through from the time of eighth-grade graduation. This procedure has the additional advantage that the youth studied are of approximately the same age. Since the graduates of the 1929 class could be followed through for a greater number of years than graduates of the 1931 or 1933 classes, the discussion at this point is limited to the 1929 class.

As indicated in figures 1 and 2, the transition from school to labor market and other activities was virtually complete for the 1929 class by the time this study was made. Whereas nearly all of the boys and girls of this class were in school on January 1, 1929, only 4 percent of the boys and 1½ percent of the girls were still in school on July 1, 1938.³ The entrance of some youth into the labor market before July 1929 is explained by the fact that January as well as June eighth-grade graduates were included in the study.

The proportion of youth remaining in school dropped sharply each year between June 1 and July 1, or at the time when most school years end. In the case of the 1929 eighth-grade graduates, the sharpest drop in the number attending school occurred in the middle of 1933, at the time of normal graduation from high school. About one-half of the youth (52 percent of the boys and 51 percent of the girls) were in school in June 1933, but by the next month the percentages in school were only 29 and 26, respectively.⁴ The sharpness

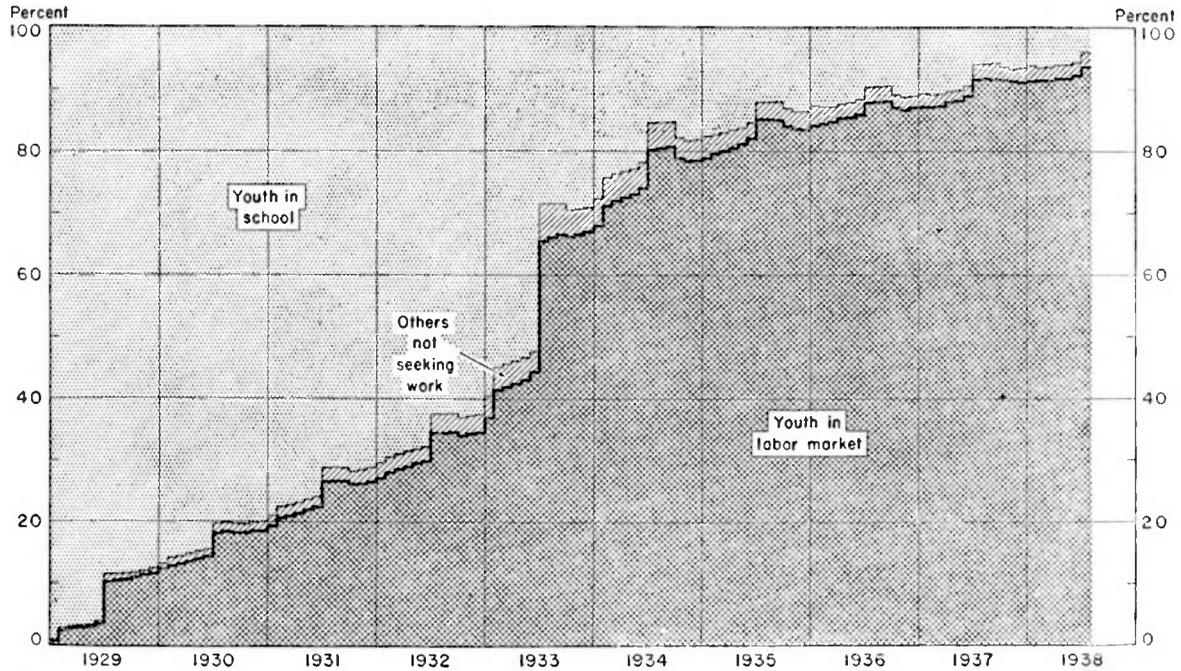
² Throughout this report the term "youth in the labor market" refers to youth who were employed or unemployed workers. "Employed youth" means those who worked for pay or profit (or without pay in the case of apprentices) for any number of hours during a given week. "Unemployed youth" includes persons engaged on public work programs (State and local work relief, CCC, NYA, CWA, WPA, etc.), and persons who had no form of employment but were actively seeking work, i. e., making definite attempts to secure jobs by enrolling at employment exchanges, applying to employers by letter or visit, advertising or answering advertisements for jobs, etc. Included in the category "unemployed" were a small number of youth on layoff or on strike or lockout. New workers, as well as youth who had previously had jobs, were included among the unemployed. Unpaid family workers were not considered as being in the labor market.

³ See appendix table 1. Youth were considered as "in school" during the summer months if their subsequent activity history showed continuation in school, or if they stated at the time of interview that they were planning to return to school in the fall of 1938. In cases where youth worked while in full-time school, "in school" took precedence.

⁴ See appendix table 1.

Fig. 1 - ACTIVITIES OF MALE LABOR-MARKET ENTRANTS OF THE 1929 EIGHTH-GRADE GRADUATING CLASS

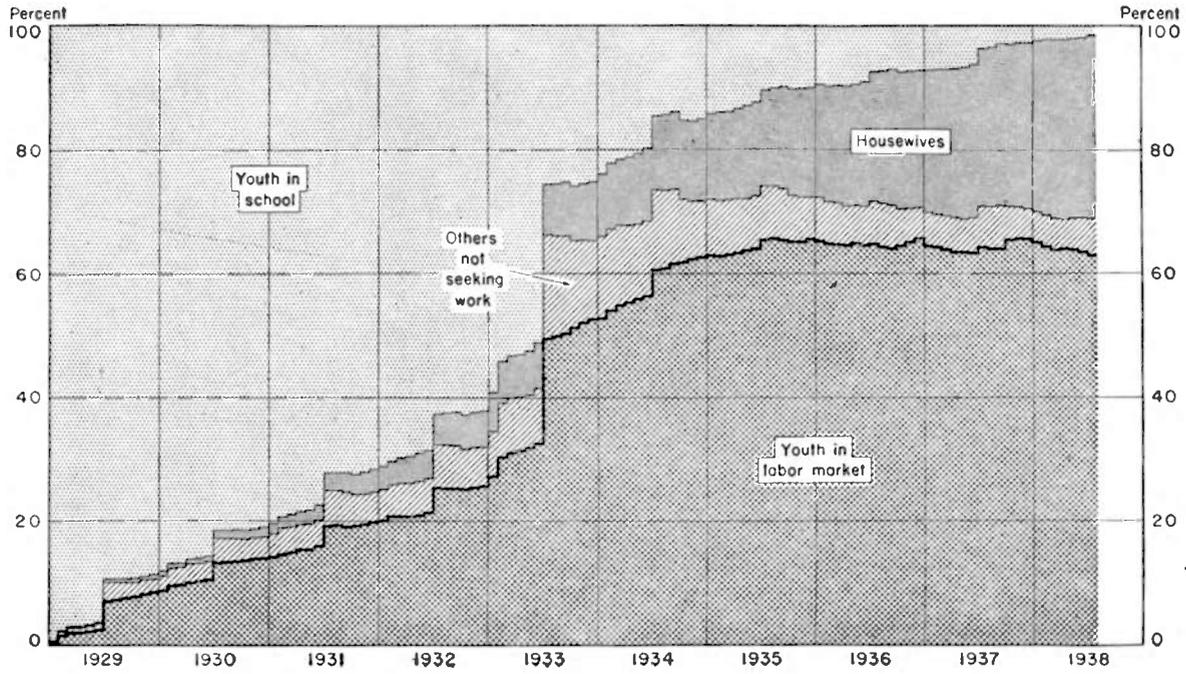
January 1, 1929 - July 1, 1938



Source: Appendix table I.

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Fig. 2 — ACTIVITIES OF FEMALE LABOR-MARKET ENTRANTS OF THE 1929 EIGHTH-GRADE GRADUATING CLASS
January 1, 1929 — July 1, 1938



Source: Appendix table I,

WPA 3861

of this decline indicates that a large proportion of the youth ended their formal education upon graduation from high school. The drop in 1937, corresponding to normal graduation from college, does not stand out nearly so sharply, since only a comparatively small proportion of youth manage to go through college. The most typical educational attainment of young urban workers entering the labor supply is high-school graduation.⁵

Throughout the high-school years the proportion of boys and girls dropping out of school each year was about the same. From the middle of 1933 on, however, the rate of continuation in school was somewhat higher for the young men than for the young women, indicating that more young men had the advantage of a college education.

That the great majority of youth enter the labor market upon leaving school is clearly indicated by figures 1 and 2. Among boys particularly, labor-market activities were far more important than non-labor-market activities⁶ after the time of leaving school. Among girls, however, participation in the labor market did not increase in the same proportion as dropouts from school. In the first place, the number of housewives increased slowly but steadily, particularly after high-school graduation, until the proportion reached 30 percent by July 1, 1938. In addition, other non-labor-market activities were more important among girls than among boys; for example, some girls helped at home with the housework.

In spite of the increasingly large proportion of young women who were housewives or who were engaged in other non-labor-market activities, the proportion in the labor market⁷ remained fairly constant during the last 4 years of the survey period. At least during the youth period, getting and holding jobs are problems that face a majority of urban women.

Labor-Market Activities

With the brief discussion that has been given of youth's absorption into the labor market and some of the factors conditioning that absorption, it is possible to study more thoroughly the group in which chief interest centers in this report—youth who were in the labor

⁵ See table 5, p. 20.

⁶ Other non-labor-market activities included illness, vacation, unpaid family work, "waiting for a job to open up," and any activity other than employment or unemployment. Owing to the strictness of the definition of unemployment (see footnote 2, p. 2), it is probable that some youth classified under "other non-labor-market activity" are youth who would be regarded as unemployed according to a more liberal definition of unemployment. Examples of such marginal cases are youth who were temporarily not making an active search for work because of illness or because they believed no work to be available in their particular trades or industries.

⁷ Housewives who also were working or seeking work were classified according to the latter activities.

market. Again, 1929 eighth-grade graduates alone are considered, because they were of approximately the same age, and because their activities could be followed for a greater number of years. Figures 3 and 4 show separately for boys and girls the proportions of labor-market participants who were employed for 30 hours or more per week, employed for less than 30 hours per week, engaged on work programs, or seeking work each month from January 1929 to July 1938.

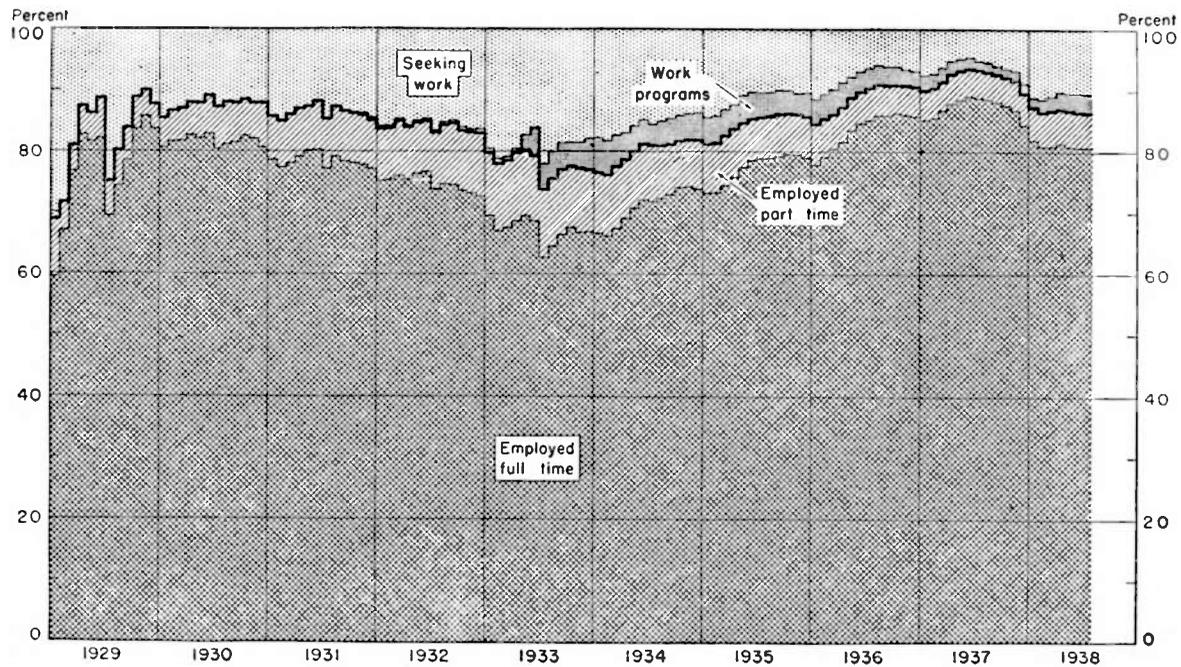
At all times, even when economic conditions are severely depressed, the employed constitute the great majority of the labor force. The severity of the unemployment problem must be measured in terms of the size of a minority group. Thus when 20 percent of the labor force is jobless, unemployment is at a critical point. This general observation must be kept in mind in appraising figures 3 and 4, in which employed youth constitute the largest proportion of the labor-market entrants. In addition, it must be remembered that the strict definition of labor-market participation used in this study results in a somewhat lower rate of unemployment than would be obtained under the usual broader definitions.

The level of employment among these youth was influenced principally by three conditions: general business activity, the number of youth coming into the labor market, and the characteristics of the new job seekers. The influence of general economic conditions is shown in the down trend of employment from 1930 to 1933, the slow rise to 1937, and the slight decline in 1938. The effect of periodically increased competition for jobs, resulting from the wavelike influx of large numbers of youth into the labor market, is shown especially clearly in the middle of 1929 and 1933, when the eighth-grade and high-school graduates, respectively, entered the market and competed—with other workers and among themselves—for jobs. After 1933, however, the number of additional youth from the 1929 class who entered the labor market was so small that they did not produce sharp peaks of unemployment as they began to seek work. Finally, the generally rising level of employment was in part a reflection of the higher employment qualifications, in age and education, of the later entrants to the labor market.

Prior to high-school graduation a larger proportion of girls than of boys was unemployed; after that point unemployment hit both sexes with about equal force. As time went on the increasing number of withdrawals of young women to become homemakers probably relieved the competitive pressure and improved the job prospects of those young women of the same ages and educational levels who remained in the labor market. The employment record of girls may also have improved after high-school graduation because from that point on many more girls were eligible for clerical jobs—a field in which they found relatively good employment opportunities.

Fig 3—EMPLOYMENT STATUS OF MALE LABOR-MARKET ENTRANTS OF THE 1929 EIGHTH-GRADE GRADUATING CLASS

January 1, 1929 - July 1, 1938

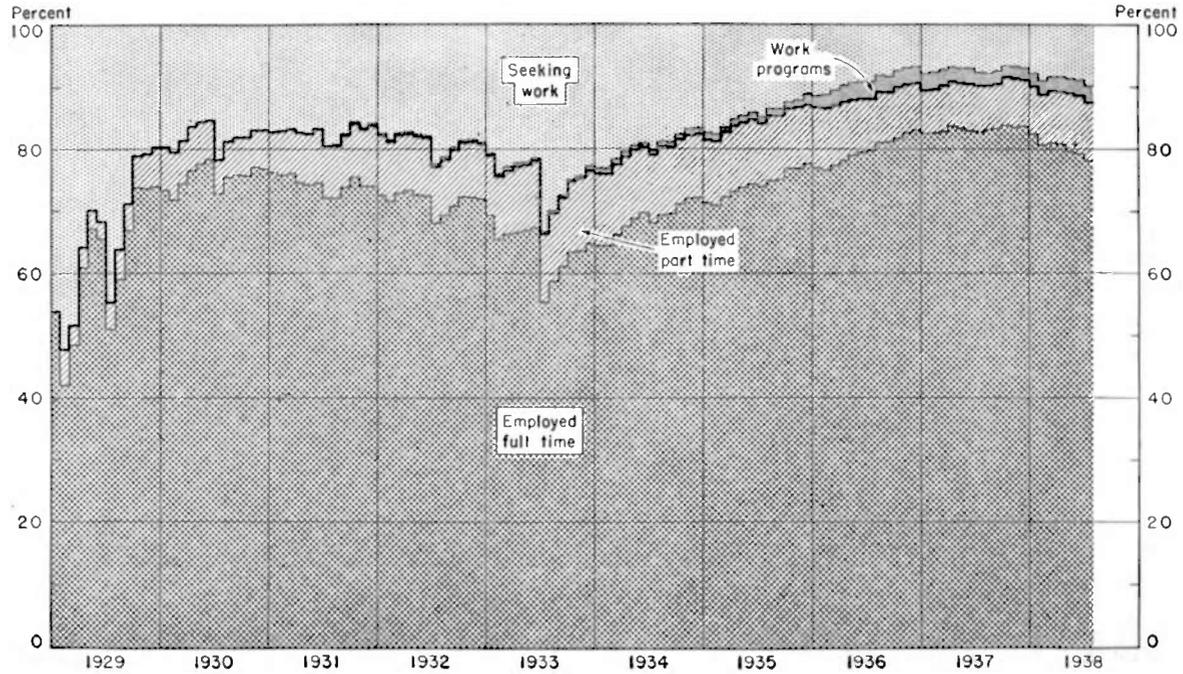


Source: Appendix table 2.

WPA 3862

Fig. 4 - EMPLOYMENT STATUS OF FEMALE LABOR-MARKET ENTRANTS OF THE 1929 EIGHTH-GRADE GRADUATING CLASS

January 1, 1929 - July 1, 1938



Source: Appendix table 2.

WPA 3893

Although both sexes were about equally subject to unemployment during the last 5 years of the survey period, a higher proportion of boys than of girls obtained emergency work-program employment. In the first place, only boys are able to enroll in the CCC. In the second place, young men are likely to be given priority over young women by local relief agencies in certification to WPA jobs. Finally, boys have a slight advantage in securing NYA employment because they are considered to be more permanently in the labor market, and hence in greater need of work training.

The activities of the 1929 class are closely paralleled by the activities of the 1931 and 1933 classes. With allowance for variations in the state of economic activity, youth of these later classes exhibit the same wavelike entry into the labor market from school, the same shifting into the status of housewife, and the same trend toward more employment and less unemployment as they grow older. Since these relationships have been discussed in some detail for the 1929 class, and since the activities of youth of the 1931 and 1933 classes cannot be traced for so many years, a time-series analysis of the later classes is not presented here.⁸

YOUTH WHO DID NOT ENTER THE LABOR MARKET

The preceding description of youth's activities dealt only with youth who were in the labor market at some time between their eighth-grade graduation and the time of enumeration. This group did not constitute the whole of the group interviewed, because some boys and girls had never entered the labor market up to the time the study was conducted. The size of this latter group and its activities at the time of enumeration may be mentioned briefly at this point.

Youth interviewed in the 7 cities numbered 30,075 in all. Of these, 4,391, or 15 percent, had never been in the labor market up to July 1, 1938. These youth were chiefly the younger ones at the time of interview; 14 percent of them were members of the 1929 class, 29 percent members of the 1931 class, and 57 percent members of the 1933 class. Most of these youth were still attending school at the time of interview. Some of the older girls were engaged in homemaking at that time. Finally, a small proportion of these boys and girls were ill, on vacation, engaged in unpaid family work, or otherwise not actively participating in the labor market.⁹

This brief outline of the activities of those who had not entered the labor market is applicable only as of the time the study was

⁸ See appendix tables 3-6 for monthly data on activities of youth of the 1931 and 1933 classes.

⁹ See appendix table 7.

conducted. It is probable that most of the youth who were still in school on that date entered the labor market at a later date, and that some of the housewives and other nonworkers also went to work or sought work later on. However, since the activities of these youth up to the time of interview throw no light on the way in which absorption into the labor market occurs, this group is excluded from discussion from this point on. The tables throughout this report refer, therefore, except as noted, to the 25,684 labor-market entrants.

ENTRY INTO THE LABOR MARKET

The great majority of youth start working or looking for work within a short time after leaving school. Some of these youth enter the labor market with qualifications and connections that enable them to get quick starts in their chosen fields; others, not so well equipped, have a hard time getting any kind of jobs. Some youth look forward eagerly and confidently to "being on their own"; others face the prospect of looking for jobs with apprehension. But whatever their qualifications or their attitudes, nearly all must eventually come face to face with the problem of making a living. The first stage of their labor-market experiences—entrance into the labor market—is considered in this section.

Reasons for Leaving School

For most youth, as will be shown below, entrance into the labor market is the almost immediate aftermath of leaving school. Because of this close and almost automatic connection between the two stages of youth's development, and because youth's success in the labor market is largely dependent upon how much education they have, it is important to know their reasons for leaving school. In table 1 youth's own statements of why they first left school are tabulated according to the number of years of education they completed.¹⁰

Nearly half (47 percent) of the youth left school because they could not afford to continue their educations. It is especially noteworthy that 56 percent of the high-school graduates reported that they did not go to college for economic reasons. The importance youth attach to higher education is vividly shown by the fact that one-fifth of the college graduates reported that they ended their educations because they were financially unable to continue.

In about one-quarter of the cases youth left school because they had no desire for further education. Lack of interest or ability are

¹⁰ Owing to the difficulty of assigning a single reason for leaving school, and the differences in the ways youth expressed their reasons, there is some overlapping in the tabulation presented. Nevertheless, the main outlines are sufficiently clear to show the forces operating.

the major causes covered by this reason for leaving school. However, "no desire for further education" also covers the situation in which a youth feels that he has obtained all the education he needs or had planned to take. For example, nearly half (47 percent) of the college graduates reported that they left school because they had no desire for further education.

Table 1.—Reason Youth First Left School, by Years of Schooling Completed

Reason youth first left school	Years of schooling completed					
	Total	8	9-11	12	13-15	16 and over
	Percent distribution					
Total.....	100	100	100	100	100	100
Financial.....	47	48	37	56	44	21
No desire for further education.....	24	25	23	24	16	47
Preferred to work.....	11	8	13	10	12	14
Disliked school.....	5	7	10	1	3	1
Illness or physical disability.....	4	3	6	2	5	3
Marriage.....	3	2	5	2	3	1
Other.....	6	7	6	5	17	13

Youth who reported leaving school because they preferred to work numbered one-ninth of all youth. Many of these boys and girls must have decided to leave school only after weighing the relative advantages of finding employment immediately or deferring it until after further attendance at school. The choice of leaving school was the more understandable when they had definite offers of jobs. The real test of their wisdom in preferring jobs to further schooling depends mainly upon the kind of work for which they could qualify with the amount of training they possessed. In this connection, it is significant that youth who left school because they preferred to work had higher earnings on their first full-time jobs than those who left school for any other reason.¹¹

Few youth reported that they left school because they disliked it, because of physical disabilities, to get married, or for other miscellaneous reasons. When boys and girls left school because they had no desire for further education, because they preferred to work, or because they disliked school, there is reason to suspect that in some cases the school was partly to blame for letting its students lose interest. This is particularly likely where academic training was unsuited to the needs of youth who were anxious for vocational instruction.

First Activity After Leaving School

The proportion of youth that entered the labor market immediately after leaving school, and the success attending their efforts, may be

¹¹ See appendix table 8.

seen most clearly when youth's first activities ¹² after leaving school are tabulated. In table 2 these activities, and their average ¹³ duration, are shown.

Table 2.—First Activity of Youth After Leaving School

First activity after leaving school	Percent distribution ¹	Average duration of first activity (in months) ²
Total.....	100	6
In labor market.....	76	5
Employed.....	42	10
Full-time ³	34	10
Part-time ⁴	8	7
Unemployed.....	34	3
Not in labor market.....	24	6
Illness.....	3	8
Housewife.....	2	18
Unpaid family worker.....	1	10
Other.....	18	5

¹ Includes all activities after leaving school whether ended by date of interview or still continuing.

² Includes only activities that had ended prior to the date of interview.

³ 30 hours or more per week.

⁴ Less than 30 hours per week.

Three-fourths of the youth entered the labor market within 1 week after leaving school. The remaining one-fourth of the labor-market youth did not enter, on the average, until 6 months after leaving school. Thus the great majority of boys and girls changed from student to worker directly and not by passing first through one of the other nonworker stages. With this almost instantaneous swelling of the labor supply as youth leave school, it is not surprising that the rate of unemployment among youth rises to a peak at such times.

If the youth entering the labor market directly from school are considered as a separate group, it is found that they divide according to employment status as follows: 45 percent were employed full time, 10 percent were employed part time, and 45 percent were unemployed. The latter group remained unemployed for an average of 3 months before getting their first jobs or leaving the labor market.

Several points should be kept in mind in appraising the significance of these findings. In some cases, youth's first jobs after leaving school were a continuation of part-time jobs held while they were in school. It is probable also that some youth remained in school until they located jobs and then started immediately to work. Finally, some youth undoubtedly failed to recall at the time of interview the precise time of getting their first jobs; periods of unemployment were likely to be forgotten as the time since entry to the labor market increased.

The role of part-time jobs in raising the level of total employment above that of unemployment should also not be forgotten, for as many

¹² These first activities were the ones engaged in during the first week after leaving school.

¹³ "Average" means median throughout this report, except where otherwise specified.

youth were unemployed as were employed full time. Although some youth wanted only part-time work, most presumably wanted regular full-time work; they were therefore only partially successful in their first efforts in the labor market. In this connection it should be noted that the average duration of part-time jobs was 7 months, as compared with 10 months for full-time jobs. Either part-time employment was less steady than full-time, or else youth left their part-time jobs as soon as they could to get full-time jobs. Whichever was the case, young workers who got part-time jobs were less well off, on the average, than youth who got full-time jobs.

There is an important inference to be drawn from these findings. It is that youth who begin seeking employment before they leave school can increase appreciably their chances of avoiding unemployment. Doubtless some of the youth who got jobs directly after leaving school had made no special efforts to locate openings while in school. Many, however, must have been foresighted enough to anticipate the time when they would have to seek work, and therefore let their teachers, friends, relatives, and prospective employers know that they were looking for jobs. Such a procedure cannot increase the total number of jobs available, but it can give a head start to individual youth who are wise enough to use it.

Relatively few of the youth who postponed entrance to the labor market when they left school did so because they were ill, acting as homemakers, or helping as unpaid workers in family businesses. Most explained that their delayed entrance was due to such miscellaneous reasons as helping at home with the housework, traveling, or taking a vacation before beginning to look for work. This group also included a considerable number of youth who were "able and willing" to work but who were not making sufficiently definite attempts at finding employment to meet the strict definition of "seeking work" employed in this study. Inactive workers, such as these, who are on the fringe of the labor market, are often regarded as unemployed. Their inclusion with the nonworkers in this study tends to lower the rate of unemployment reported.

The average time between leaving school and entering the labor market in the case of youth who spent some intervening time as nonworkers was 3 months for boys and 6 months for girls. Many of the young women who entered the labor market later but not directly from school were occupied as housewives during the intervening period; the average duration of such periods was 1½ years. Some girls also entered the labor market principally to gain experience in case of the possible future need for work; in such cases they were quite likely to spend some time at home before seeking work. In general, young men are under more pressure than young women to plunge into gainful work immediately upon leaving school.

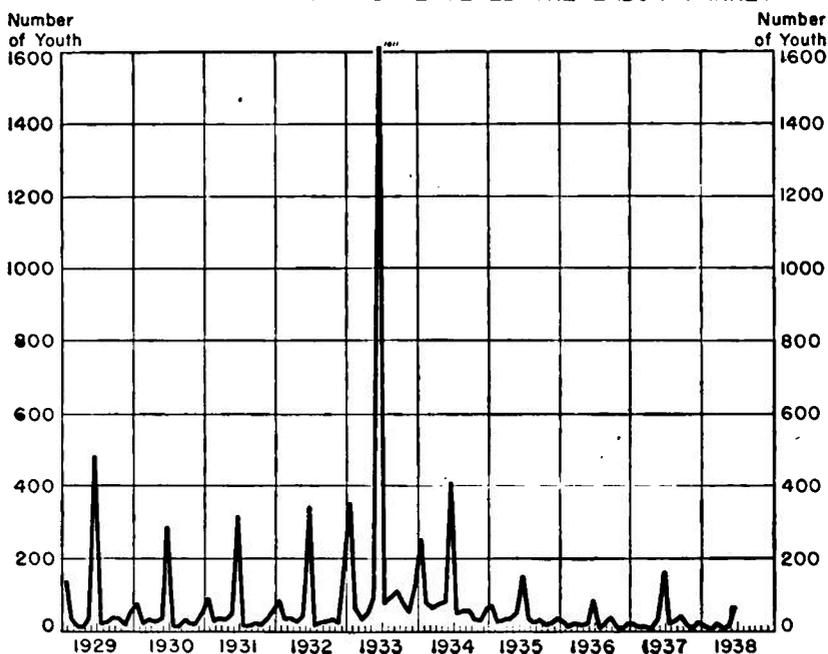
Time of First Entry

Each June newspaper editorials remind us that a new crop of youth is ready to leave the "cloistered halls of learning" for the "serious business of life." It is, of course, obvious that with the end of most school terms coming in June, and with most youth leaving school at the time of graduation or at the end of a school year, the greatest influx of new workers comes at this time. Nevertheless, it is important also to ascertain the relative number of youth entering the labor market during other months, particularly at the middle of the school term, and the number entering in different years. The time-series method of analysis again throws light on these relationships.

The 1929 class illustrates best the time at which youth enter the labor market, because the activities of this class may be studied over a period lasting nearly 10 years.

Figure 5 shows clearly both the seasonal and the year-to-year changes in the number of youth of the 1929 class entering the labor market each month. The completion of a particular amount of education is evidently of great importance in affecting the time at which youth first seek work. This is shown not only in the well-marked peaks in June and the smaller peaks in January, but also in

Fig. 5—MONTH AND YEAR YOUTH OF THE 1929 EIGHTH-GRADE GRADUATING CLASS FIRST ENTERED THE LABOR MARKET



Source: Appendix table 9.

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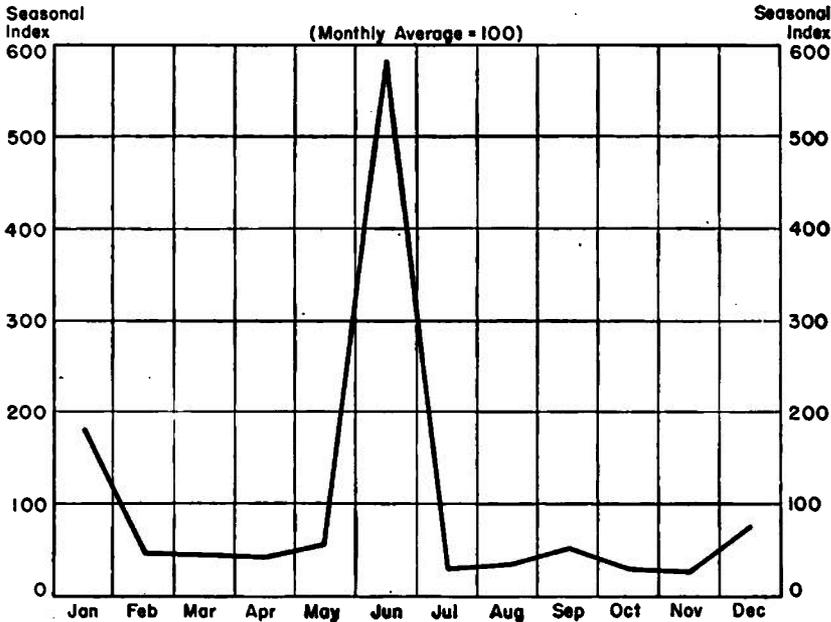
the especially prominent peaks occurring in 1933 and 1929 when the high-school and grade-school graduates, respectively, entered the labor market. This chart confirms the earlier finding that the most typical time of entering the labor market is immediately after high-school graduation.

In order to express the findings shown in figure 5 concisely, a seasonal index of the time at which youth entered the labor market was constructed. Since the seasonal pattern was the same for each of the three classes, the index was calculated on the basis of all entries into the labor market. Taking the monthly average throughout the year as 100, the relative number of youth entering the labor market each month was as follows:

January.....	179	May.....	57	September.....	52
February.....	47	June.....	583	October.....	29
March.....	44	July.....	30	November.....	26
April.....	43	August.....	34	December.....	76

These indexes are shown graphically in figure 6. The most striking thing about this chart is the outstanding importance of June as the time of labor-market entrance; nearly half of the youth entered the labor market during this month. January was only about one-

Fig. 6 - SEASONAL INDEXES OF MONTH IN WHICH YOUTH OF THE 1929, 1931, AND 1933 CLASSES FIRST ENTERED THE LABOR MARKET



Source: Appendix table 9.

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third as important as June in the number of youth entering the labor market. The small number entering the labor market in the remaining months were youth who dropped out of school at some time during the semester, or who spent a period as nonworkers before seeking employment.¹⁴

Since young persons leaving school are the largest source of additions to the labor supply, and since their entrance to the labor market is so definitely concentrated in one or two months during the year, it follows that the labor supply grows not by constant but by widely varying monthly increments. Consequently, unemployment is intensified in months when the number of new workers entering the labor market is greatest. Monthly estimates of unemployment are thus likely to be seriously in error if they assume that the annual increase in the size of the working force is distributed evenly throughout the months of the year.

CHARACTERISTICS OF LABOR-MARKET ENTRANTS

From the information concerning the month and year in which youth of a given eighth-grade class entered the labor market, it is possible to infer something about their ages and amounts of education at that time, and therefore about the adequacy of their preparation for work. In this study these important characteristics of new entrants to the labor force may be analyzed, using data that bear directly upon the question. In addition, age and amount of education at time of entrance may be related to various social and economic characteristics of the youth, to see how these background factors affect the time of starting to work.

Age of Labor-Market Entrants

When youth enter the labor market at an early age, generally speaking, they are less well equipped to get good jobs, and jobs that promise advancement, than they would be if they had obtained more education. Of course, work during summer vacations is helpful because it adds to a youth's experience. But since we are concerned here with the ages and education only of youth seeking their first jobs after leaving school, it is fair to assume that late entrance to the labor market, in general, indicates better preparation, and less economic compulsion to seek work, than does early entrance. (This is not to deny that some youth who leave school at a fairly early age to get jobs do so voluntarily.)

The average age at the time of entering the labor market, for youth in all seven cities, was 18.2 years. More detailed information is given in table 3 of the age at which youth entered the labor market.

¹⁴ December and May are the months of graduation in the San Francisco primary and secondary schools. The slight rise in these months reflects in part the graduation of youth in this city.

Table 3.—Age Youth First Entered the Labor Market, by Sex

Age first entered the labor market	Total	Male	Female
	<i>Percent distribution</i>		
Total.....	100	100	100
Under 16 years.....	10	10	11
16 years.....	12	12	11
17 years.....	24	24	23
18 years.....	29	28	30
19 years.....	15	16	14
20 years and over.....	10	10	11
Average age (in years).....	18.2	18.1	18.2

The fact that more than half of these youth entered the labor market at the age of 17 or 18 shows again that the most usual time at which youth start "on their own" is soon after high-school graduation. The groups that started to work before they were 16 or after they were 20 each accounted for only about a tenth of the labor-market entrants. The proportion of labor-market entrants aged 20 and over would have been larger if the study had been taken later, when more of the eighth-grade graduates of the 1931 and 1933 classes had entered the labor market. Even then, however, youth entering the labor market at the age of 20 or over would be in a distinct minority.

Two tendencies work in opposite directions to affect the ages at which boys and girls, respectively, enter the labor market. On the one hand, more boys than girls continue their education past the high-school level; on the other hand, more girls than boys spend some time as nonworkers before entering the labor market. As a result, there was no significant difference in the ages at which boys and girls entered the labor market (18.1 and 18.2 years, respectively). This fact illustrates again that boys and girls participate in the labor market under very similar conditions during their first years after leaving school.

City Differences

The average ages at which youth entered the labor market differed somewhat according to the city in which they graduated from the eighth grade, as shown in the following statement:

Seattle.....	18.6	Binghamton.....	18.2
Duluth.....	18.5	Denver.....	18.1
Birmingham.....	18.3	St. Louis.....	17.3
San Francisco.....	18.3		

The intercity differences in the ages at which youth entered the labor market are partly attributable to differences in the educational requirements of the States. Considering, for example, only the cities at the extremes of the distribution, the State of Washington requires youth to attend school until 18 years of age or completion of high

school, whereas Missouri requires youth to attend school until 18 years of age or completion of elementary school.¹⁵ In addition to the school attendance requirements, the degree of their enforcement, the social characteristics and economic status of the population, and the types of industries in the different cities probably all had some influence on the age at which boys and girls entered the labor market.

Section-of-City Differences

The economic status of their families is also very important in determining the age at which youth enter the labor market. The measure of economic status used here is based on average rentals in the section of the city in which the youth lived at the time of graduation from the eighth grade. One-fourth of the city's youth were classed as living in high rental areas, one-fourth in low, and the remaining one-half in medium. The average age at time of entering the labor market is presented in relation to section of city in table 4.

Table 4.—Age of Youth at First Entrance to the Labor Market, by Section of City

Age first entered the labor market	Section of city (rental areas)		
	Low	Medium	High
	<i>Percent distribution</i>		
Total	100	100	100
Under 16 years.....	16	10	5
16-17 years.....	37	36	30
18-19 years.....	39	45	48
20 years and over.....	8	9	17
Average age (in years).....	17.9	18.1	18.5

¹⁵ The following table shows the school attendance laws for the seven States ranked in order of the average age at which youth entered the labor market in the survey cities. The table is derived from U. S. Office of Education, *Compulsory School Attendance Laws and Their Administration*, Bulletin No. 4, U. S. Department of the Interior, Washington, D. C., 1935.

State	Minimum requirements for school attendance	Minimum requirements for work permit
Washington.....	18 years of age or completion of high school	14 years of age and completion of eighth grade, or 15 years of age and no other requirement
Minnesota.....	16 years of age or completion of eighth grade	14 years of age and completion of eighth grade
Alabama.....	16 years of age or 14 years of age if eighth grade completed	14 years of age and completion of eighth grade
California.....	18 years of age or completion of high school	14 years of age and completion of eighth grade, or 15 years of age and completion of seventh grade
New York.....	17 years of age or completion of high school	14 years of age and completion of eighth grade, or 15 years of age and completion of sixth grade
Colorado.....	16 years of age or 14 years of age if eighth grade completed	14 years of age and ability to read and write
Missouri.....	18 years of age or completion of elementary school	14 years of age and completion of sixth grade

The association shown in this table between early entrance to the labor market and low economic level is due to a complex of factors, among which may be mentioned limited educational opportunity and social custom. Basic to all of these, however, is economic need. Children of poorer families must "get out and scratch" at an earlier age, on the average, than children of more comfortably situated families.

The same inverse relationship between the economic level of their families and the ages at which youth entered the labor market appears when economic level is measured by the usual occupations of the youth's fathers.¹⁶ Youth from homes of higher social-economic level entered the labor market relatively late. Better educated and more mature when they sought work, these youth had an advantage over their fellows in getting jobs.

Education of Labor-Market Entrants

The normal procedure is for a young person to seek work or to begin working as soon as he has completed the amount of schooling that he wants and is able to acquire. As a result, there is a close relationship between educational level and age at entrance to the labor market. Table 5 shows the amount of education of all youth who entered the labor market; the distribution by class is given because youth from the later classes had not had the same length of time in which to take college work as youth of the earlier classes.¹⁷

Perhaps the most satisfactory information concerning the amount of education of young labor-market entrants is that for the 1929 class, since these youth could have completed college by the time the study was made. At the two extremes, about one-seventh (14 percent) of these youth had no more than an elementary-school education, and only 6 percent had graduated from college.¹⁸ The largest single group, amounting to 44 percent of the total, graduated from high school but did not continue further. This is by far the largest and most typical group of urban youth for whom jobs must be found.

¹⁶ See appendix table 10.

¹⁷ The table refers to the amount of education completed as of the date of interview, July 1, 1938, and not as of the time at which the youth first entered the labor market. Because some youth returned to school after a term or more in the labor market, this table exaggerates slightly the amount of education possessed by youth at the time of first entrance to the labor market.

¹⁸ The average level of education of all interviewed youth was somewhat higher than that of labor-market entrants, owing to the fact that most youth who had not yet entered the labor market were still in school. The average number of school years completed by all interviewed youth was 12.3, by labor-market youth 12.2. Similarly, 8 percent of all interviewed youth of the 1929 class had completed college, as compared with 6 percent of the labor-market youth of the 1929 class. (See table 5 and appendix table 11.)

Table 5.—Years of Schooling Youth Completed, by Eighth-Grade Graduating Class

Years of schooling completed by July 1, 1938	Eighth-grade graduating class			
	Total	1929	1931	1933
	<i>Percent distribution</i>			
Total	100	100	100	100
8	12	14	11	10
9-11	30	26	30	35
12	49	44	49	53
13-15	7	10	10	2
16 and more	2	6	*	—
Average	12.2	12.2	12.2	12.1

* Less than 0.5 percent.

Since the educational requirements for most types of jobs are constantly rising, it is highly important to young workers that they acquire all the education they can before entering the labor market. Disregarding differences in aptitude and liking for school, youth's chances of acquiring good educations depend largely upon the ability of their families to finance their schooling. Evidence to this effect is contained in table 6, which shows the relationship between the educational levels, reached by young labor-market entrants and one measure of their families' social-economic levels, the usual occupations of the fathers.

Table 6.—Years of Schooling Youth Completed, by Usual Occupational Class of Father

Years of schooling completed by July 1, 1938	Usual occupational class of father			
	White-collar ¹	Skilled	Semiskilled	Unskilled
	<i>Percent distribution</i>			
Total	100	100	100	100
8	6	12	17	16
9-11	22	31	34	39
12	55	51	44	41
13-15	13	6	4	4
16 or more	4	1	1	*
Average	12.6	12.2	12.0	11.7

* Less than 0.5 percent.

¹ Includes professional persons; proprietors, managers, and officials; and clerical workers.

The traditional aim of parents in this country has been to give their children better educations than they themselves received. Although this aim is partially fulfilled, as indicated for instance by the high proportion of semiskilled and unskilled fathers who could send their children through high school, nevertheless families in the lower income groups are not able on the average to give their children as good educations as families in the higher income groups. This is shown especially clearly in the proportion of youth who entered college—

17 percent among white-collar workers' children, 4 percent among unskilled workers' children. Since opportunities in the labor market are influenced by the degree of youth's educational preparation, there is a tendency for the handicaps of his family to be passed on to the youth himself.

TIME IN THE LABOR MARKET BEFORE FIRST FULL-TIME JOB

The aspect of youth's economic problems that has called forth most attention is the unemployment and underemployment many of them pass through before they get regular jobs. One of the best ways of measuring the rate at which youth were absorbed into full-time employment is by noting the number of months they spent in the labor market before getting their first full-time jobs. Table 7 shows the proportion of boys and girls that found jobs quickly and the proportion that underwent various periods of unemployment or part-time employment before getting regular full-time jobs.

Table 7.—Time Youth Spent in the Labor Market Before First Full-Time Job

Time in the labor market before first full-time job	Percent distribution	Time in the labor market before first full-time job	Percent distribution
Total.....	100	1 year but less than 2.....	6
None.....	49	2 years or more.....	4
Less than 3 months.....	15	Never had a full-time job.....	9
3-5 months.....	9	In labor market July 1, 1938.....	6
6-11 months.....	8	Not in labor market July 1, 1938.....	3

Nearly one-half (49 percent) of the youth who entered the labor market got full-time jobs immediately (i. e., within 1 week).¹⁹ For a considerable number of youth, therefore, the first stage of their transition from student to full-time worker was accomplished with little difficulty.

The other one-half were not so fortunate in finding full-time jobs quickly. Some of these youth, of course, wanted only part-time work, and some who had not had full-time jobs up to the time of interview had been in the labor market no more than a few months. Nevertheless, a certain group of youth illustrates the economic difficulties of new workers at their worst. Most youth who had not obtained full-time jobs within a year or more fall in this group. At

¹⁹ It will be noted that the proportion of youth (49 percent) shown in table 7 as obtaining full-time jobs immediately upon entering the labor market is higher than that indicated in table 2, p. 12 (45 percent). The category "in labor market" in table 2 includes only youth who entered the labor market as soon as they left school. Table 7 includes in addition youth who spent some time as housewives, unpaid family workers, and other nonparticipants in the labor market before they sought their first jobs. The latter group in many cases retained their nonworker status until they actually obtained full-time jobs.

least one-tenth of the labor-market entrants faced such difficulties in finding their first full-time jobs that they were early marked off as a disadvantaged group.²⁰

City Differences

The question next arises: Did youth who spent a long time in the labor market before getting their first full-time jobs come to a greater extent from some sections of the population than from others?

One factor that has a bearing on the ease with which youth get their first full-time jobs is their location. Not only are some cities normally in a less active state economically than others but some are also more vulnerable to fluctuations in economic conditions. Table 8 shows for each city the amount of time youth spent in the labor market before obtaining full-time jobs.

Table 8.—Time Youth Spent in the Labor Market Before First Full-Time Job, by City

Time in the labor market before first full-time job	Bing- ham- ton	Bir- ming- ham	Den- ver	Du- luth	St. Louis	San Fran- cisco	Seattle
	Percent distribution						
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
None.....	53	45	64	42	48	46	49
Less than 3 months.....	16	15	11	17	14	19	16
3-5 months.....	9	10	8	11	9	9	11
6-11 months.....	8	7	5	10	8	10	7
12 months or more.....	7	11	6	10	13	8	8
Never had a full-time job.....	7	12	6	10	8	8	9

Although the differences among the cities are not outstanding, certain generalizations may nevertheless be made. Denver and Binghamton made the best showing, both in the high proportion of youth who got jobs immediately upon entering the labor market, and in the low proportion who were unemployed for a year or more before their first full-time jobs, or who had never had full-time jobs up to the time the survey was made. Birmingham and Duluth made the poorest showing, on the whole. These two cities are dependent to a great extent upon the iron and steel industry, the output of which

²⁰ In another report based on this study a strict definition of "disadvantaged youth" yielded the same proportion (10 percent) among youth in the labor market on July 1, 1938. In that report, youth were considered as "disadvantaged" who by July 1, 1938, had been unemployed at least 50 percent of their total time in the labor market and who in addition had a minimum amount of unemployment of 12 months. (Payne, Stanley L., *Disadvantaged Youth on the Labor Market*, Series I, No. 25, Division of Research, Work Projects Administration, Federal Works Agency, Washington, D. C., 1940, p. 4.)

sank to a low level during the worst years of the depression.²¹ Since most youth do not migrate in search of jobs, general economic conditions in the cities in which they live have a definite bearing upon the rapidity with which they find employment.

Race Differences

Just as residence in a given city affects youth's opportunities for finding work, so also their position in particular social or economic groups within a given city affects their job opportunities. Striking differences existed, for example, in the rapidity with which white and Negro youth in Birmingham and St. Louis found their first full-time jobs (table 9).

Table 9.—Time Youth Spent in the Labor Market Before First Full-Time Job, by Race

Time in the labor market before first full-time job	Birmingham		St. Louis	
	White	Negro	White	Negro
	<i>Percent distribution</i>			
Total	100	100	100	100
None	49	37	49	36
Less than 3 months	16	14	15	6
3-5 months	9	11	9	9
6-11 months	7	8	8	6
12 months or more	9	14	13	12
Never had a full-time job	10	16	6	31

White youth clearly had an advantage over Negro youth in both Birmingham and St. Louis in obtaining their first jobs. In each of these cities a considerably higher proportion of white youth than of Negro youth got full-time jobs as soon as they entered the labor market, whereas a higher proportion of Negroes than of whites either experienced a long period of unemployment before their first jobs, or

²¹ The Census of Manufactures indicates that factory employment declined more in Birmingham and Duluth during the depression than in any of the other five survey cities. Taking the average number of wage earners throughout the year 1929 as 100, the corresponding indexes for 1933 in each of the 7 cities are as follows:

Duluth	49
Birmingham	50
Seattle	62
St. Louis	65
Denver	66
Binghamton	68
San Francisco	60

(Bureau of the Census, *Biennial Census of Manufactures: 1935; Summary for Cities Having 10,000 Inhabitants or More and for Counties: 1935, 1933, and 1929*, series of State releases, U. S. Department of Commerce, Washington, D. C., 1937.)

had never held a full-time job up to the time of the survey. The disadvantaged position of Negroes appears again and again in this study, regardless of the measure of economic success used.

Differences According to Usual Occupational Class of Father

Differences in the ease of getting their first jobs are also found among youth of different social-economic backgrounds regardless of their race. Employing the usual occupational class of the youth's father as a rough measure of social-economic level, these differences are clearly brought out.

Table 10.—Time Youth Spent in the Labor Market Before First Full-Time Job, by Usual Occupational Class of Father

Time in the labor market before first full-time job	Usual occupational class of father			
	White-collar ¹	Skilled	Semiskilled	Unskilled
	Percent distribution			
Total	100	100	100	100
None	55	48	46	42
Less than 3 months	14	16	16	15
3-5 months	9	10	10	10
6-11 months	7	9	9	9
12 months or more	7	9	11	13
Never had a full-time job	8	8	8	11

¹ Includes professional persons; proprietors, managers, and officials; and clerical workers.

The higher the position of his father in the social-economic scale, the more easily does the youth find a full-time job. These differentials arise largely because the children of families higher in the social-economic scale are given greater educational advantages. Since these youth enter the labor market with better training and at a more mature age, they are more acceptable to employers. Another advantage of youth from families of higher economic level is that their parents are of more help to them in finding their first jobs than are the parents of youth from families lower in the economic scale.²²

Differences According to Earnings on First Full-Time Job

A further question that arises is whether there is any connection between the time it takes a youth to get his first full-time job and his earnings on that job. Do those who get higher paid jobs find them with comparatively little difficulty, or do they have to hunt longer than other youth? Table 11 throws light on this point.

In general, youth who got better paid jobs did so comparatively quickly, and youth who got poorer paid jobs had longer periods of job hunting. One reason for this is that many employers recruit

²² See p. 61

Table 11.—Time Youth Spent in the Labor Market Before First Full-Time Job, by Earnings on Job

Time in the labor market before first full-time job	Less than \$10	\$10-\$19	\$20-\$29	\$30-\$39	\$40 and over
	<i>Percent distribution</i>				
Total	100	100	100	100	100
None.....	53	52	57	64	67
Less than 3 months.....	17	17	15	14	10
3-5 months.....	12	11	9	6	8
6-11 months.....	8	9	8	6	4
12 months or more.....	10	11	11	10	11

youth directly from schools and colleges when filling jobs that involve specialized training. In addition, boys and girls who started at relatively well-paid jobs were on the average better educated and older and thus were able to get jobs relatively soon after entering the labor market.

Chapter II

YOUTH'S FIRST JOBS

AFTER ENTRANCE to the labor market the next important stage in youth's development is getting their first jobs. Some youth, as was shown in the preceding chapter, obtained full-time jobs almost as soon as they entered the labor market. Others went through periods of unemployment or part-time employment first. However, more than nine-tenths (91 percent) of the boys and girls who had spent some time in the labor market had had one full-time job or more by the time of interview.

In order to obtain further information on the transition process and how well different groups of youth fared in this stage of it, questions such as the following will be considered in connection with youth's first jobs: How did they learn of those jobs? In what occupations and industries did they find work? What were their wages and hours on those jobs?

In this chapter both first full-time and first part-time jobs are considered. Special attention is given to full-time jobs, however, as they represent the most important kind of labor-market participation.

HOW YOUTH LEARNED OF THEIR FIRST FULL-TIME JOBS

One of the most pertinent questions that can be asked about youth's employment experiences is: How did they get their jobs? The question is of importance not only for youth about to seek their first jobs, but also for any unemployed worker. This is not to say that the job seeker need only know the right formula to find work; a decade of depression has taught that much more is needed to get a job than determination, a neat appearance, and a knowledge of how to find job openings. The total number of jobs cannot be increased by the use of proper job-hunting techniques. The situation rather is this: If a person knows the ways in which others have succeeded in getting jobs,

he may improve his own chances by concentrating his efforts on the most fruitful methods. His chances of getting a job depend primarily upon conditions in the labor market and upon his own qualifications, but he can make his job hunting more effective by using the methods that experience has shown produce results.

In the present study youth were asked how they learned of each job they had held up to the time of interview. Table 12 lists the answers they gave regarding their first full-time jobs.

Table 12.—How Youth Learned of Their First Full-Time Jobs, by Sex

How learned of first full-time job	Total	Male	Female
	<i>Percent distribution</i>		
Total.....	100	100	100
Friend.....	31	31	31
Personal application.....	23	23	24
Parent.....	11	14	7
Other relative.....	12	12	12
At school.....	7	4	10
Former employer.....	4	5	3
Employment agency.....	4	3	5
Want ad.....	3	2	4
Other.....	5	6	4

The most usual way of locating a job is by letting friends and acquaintances know of one's efforts to find work. If a youth's friends know of his unemployment they may be able to tell him of job openings that exist in their offices or plants, and recommend him to their employers.

The next most common way of getting a job is by "making the rounds," obtaining interviews with employers or personnel officers if possible, and in any event filing applications for employment. This is hard work and involves frequent discouragement, but it paid dividends to many youth in this study.

Parents and relatives are often of great help to youth in obtaining employment. Boys were particularly likely to learn of jobs through their parents. In addition to helping their children find other jobs, parents are sometimes in a position to take their children into their own businesses. The same is true of other relatives.

The remaining ways in which youth reported that they learned of their first full-time jobs were all of minor importance compared with those already mentioned. Youth could learn of jobs through former employers only if they had worked part time before seeking their first full-time jobs. Recruiting by employers at the schools, either directly or through the school placement offices, led to jobs in some cases, but more frequently for girls than for boys. Registration at employment agencies and answering or inserting want ads in newspapers were devices seldom resorted to successfully by young workers.

It is not possible, strictly speaking, to infer that the most frequently used methods of hunting jobs were also the most effective in terms of results for effort expended. It may be that the most effective method, in the sense of successes per number of trials, was keeping in touch with former employers, but comparatively few youth could do this in seeking their first full-time jobs. It is probably safe to say, however, that the ways in which these youth most frequently learned of jobs are also the ways that hold the most promise for other new workers.¹

OCCUPATIONAL CLASSES OF FIRST FULL-TIME JOBS

The occupational pattern of youth's first full-time jobs is determined partly by the training they have acquired, but even more by the kind of job opportunities available in their communities when they seek work. When jobs were scarcest during the depression, some youth had to take work that was less skilled or responsible than they had been trained for, as for example, clerical instead of professional work. Furthermore, since the more advanced types of positions are usually held by older workers, it would not be expected that young persons would be well represented in these jobs. The occupational classes in which youth found themselves when they started to work full time are shown in table 13.

Table 13.—Occupational Classes of Youth's First Full-Time Jobs, by Sex

Occupational class ¹ of first full-time job	Male	Female
	Percent distribution	
Total.....	100	100
Professional.....	2	3
Proprietary, managerial, and official.....	3	*
Clerical.....	37	53
Accounting and semiprofessional.....	2	5
Stenography and allied.....	1	16
Other clerical.....	18	16
Sales.....	16	16
Skilled.....	3	*
Semiskilled.....	36	22
Unskilled.....	19	22
Servant and domestic.....	5	21
Laborer.....	14	*

*Less than 0.5 percent.

¹ Because of the technical impossibility of taking account of all changes in occupation on each job, the occupational class of the work performed longest on the particular job is used to describe the entire job.

About three-quarters of these boys and girls started full-time work in clerical or semiskilled positions. Another one-fifth obtained unskilled jobs—the boys chiefly as laborers, the girls as servants. Only 8 percent of the boys and 3 percent of the girls held professional, proprietary, managerial, or skilled positions.

The bulk of the jobs youth obtained were thus in occupations requiring little training in school or on the job. Semiskilled jobs,

¹ See pp. 57-62 for a fuller discussion of how youth learned of all jobs held during the survey period.

most of which are in factories, can ordinarily be learned in a few weeks or months. Likewise, selling jobs, in which about one-sixth of the youth worked, require little specialized training. Unskilled employment, of course, claims a residual group of workers, who are unable to secure more generally desired types of jobs, either because of their own lack of training, experience, or ability, or because of a scarcity of the better jobs.

It must be remembered that the proportion of white-collar workers, particularly professional persons, is lowered slightly by the fact that some of the youth who had entered college or professional schools had not completed their courses and entered the labor market by the time this study was made. The proportion of youth who got unskilled jobs is probably also understated because of the exclusion from the study of youth who had not graduated from the eighth grade.

It is sometimes said that job opportunities in white-collar occupations are entirely too few to accommodate the great numbers of youth seeking admission to them. However, the fact that two-fifths to one-half of the youth in this study got white-collar jobs shows that the field is of major importance in furnishing employment to youth. In respect to earnings, as shown later, boys fared rather poorly in clerical work, but girls fared well. It is probable, therefore, that a good many boys would prefer to prepare for jobs in fields other than clerical if they knew more precisely what average earnings are in clerical work. Vocational guidance programs should make available to youth the facts both about the number of job opportunities in particular occupational fields and the wages and working conditions on those jobs, so that youth may choose occupations with fuller knowledge of conditions in the labor market. The point stressed here, however, is that no hard-and-fast policy should be followed of discouraging youth from preparing for clerical work on the assumption that this field is exceptionally overcrowded.²

² The following quotation illustrates several misconceptions regarding opportunities for youth in white-collar work:

"In fact, white-collar jobs are among the poorer fields of job opportunity. About two-thirds of our high-school graduates hope to find white-collar work. Yet, only one-third of the present job holders in the country are employed in these types of positions." ("America's Major Occupations," *Vocational Trends*, June 1940, p. 4.)

In the first place, white-collar workers are recruited chiefly from youth with high-school or college educations. Therefore, high-school graduates have a better chance of obtaining white-collar jobs than is implied in the above quotation.

Secondly, opportunities for youth change more rapidly than opportunities for older workers. The expansion of the white-collar field in recent years has been accomplished more by drawing into them youth who had never before worked than by diverting older workers from other fields. Continued expansion of the white-collar field is likely, and will therefore mean further job opportunities for youth.

Only 3 percent of the young men were engaged in skilled occupations on their first jobs. Skilled workers are developed even more on the job than in vocational schools, so that it is to be expected that they would constitute only a small proportion of the workers in the youth group. United States census data of 1930 indicate that the proportion of skilled workers to all male nonagricultural workers does not reach a maximum until ages 35-44.³ Some of the youth in this study classified as semiskilled workers in their first full-time jobs became skilled workers at the expiration of their apprenticeship.

Occupational Classes of Youth and of Their Fathers

Do youth tend to follow in their fathers' footsteps when they go to work? Some evidence that they do, though not to any marked degree, is obtained from a comparison of youth's occupational classes on their first jobs with the usual occupational classes of their fathers (table 14).

Table 14.—Occupational Classes of Youth's First Full-time Jobs, by Occupational Class of Fathers

Occupational class of first full-time job	Usual occupational class of father					
	Professional	Proprietary, managerial, and official	Clerical	Skilled	Semi-skilled	Unskilled
	<i>Percent distribution</i>					
Total—sons.....	100	100	100	100	100	100
Professional.....	4	2	3	1	1	1
Proprietary, managerial, and official.....	2	6	2	2	1	1
Clerical.....	44	42	51	36	33	25
Skilled.....	3	5	2	4	3	3
Semiskilled.....	28	31	28	37	43	41
Unskilled.....	19	14	14	20	19	29
Total—daughters.....	100	100	100	100	100	100
Professional.....	9	5	4	3	2	2
Proprietary, managerial, and official.....	1	1	•	•	•	•
Clerical.....	69	66	71	53	44	34
Skilled.....	•	•	•	—	•	•
Semiskilled.....	9	16	14	22	28	30
Unskilled.....	12	12	11	22	26	34

*Less than 0.5 percent.

Because of the strong tendency of all youth to enter a few particular occupational groups, it cannot be said in any absolute sense that they tended to follow their fathers' occupational classes. For example, young women, regardless of their fathers' occupational classes, were more likely to go into clerical work than any other. The influence of the fathers' occupational classes does show up, however, in the relatively greater likelihood of their children's obtaining jobs in the same broad occupational fields. The young women who were most likely to enter

³ Woytinsky, W. S., *Labor in the United States*, Social Science Research Council, Washington, D. C., 1938, p. 59.

the clerical field were those whose fathers had been in the same type of work. Likewise, though only a small proportion of all youth obtained professional work on their first jobs, the proportion was highest among children of professional fathers. These relationships also hold for the other occupational groups, with only two exceptions.⁴ The occupational class in which a young person starts is thus partly determined by the occupational level of his father.

The reasons for this relationship illustrate well the way in which social stratification tends to persist. In the first place, the occupation at which a youth starts to work is largely dependent upon the amount of education he has received. Furthermore, his ability to continue in school is influenced by the economic circumstances of his family, which in turn are dependent upon the father's occupational class. The second important factor is the way in which a youth locates his first job. As shown above,⁵ a large proportion of youth were helped in obtaining their first jobs by the efforts of relatives and friends. Particularly where the youth is helped to get a job by his father or his father's friends, that job is likely to be in the field in which the father himself works or with which he is most familiar.⁶ Sometimes the youth's father is even able to give him a job at his own type of work, as in the case of the proprietor of a store or business. These various influences—some, involving economic pressure, operating powerfully, and some, involving sentiment, operating subtly—increase the likelihood that youth will find work on their fathers' occupational levels.

Occupational Classes of White and Negro Youth

Not only do Negro youth take longer than white youth to get their first full-time jobs; they also are much more likely to find themselves in menial, low-paid, and physically exhausting occupations when they do find jobs. Because Negroes were a sizable group in this study only in Birmingham and St. Louis, the comparison of their occupational grouping with that of white youth is made only for these two cities (table 15).

The proportion of youth in unskilled jobs was more than five times as high among Negroes as among whites in these two cities. Negro youth were especially highly represented in servant jobs—55 percent

⁴ The sons of proprietors, managers, and officials showed a slightly greater tendency to enter skilled work than did the sons of skilled fathers, and the daughters of unskilled fathers entered semiskilled work somewhat more frequently than did the daughters of semiskilled fathers.

⁵ See table 12, p. 28.

⁶ Some unions of skilled workers give preference to the sons of members in admitting apprentices. In such cases the relationship between father's and son's occupations is clear and direct.



ational Youth Administration (Nichols).

Industrial Worker.

Table 15.—Occupational Classes of White and Negro Youth on First Full-Time Jobs, Birmingham and St. Louis

Occupational class of first full-time job	Birmingham		St. Louis	
	White	Negro	White	Negro
	<i>Percent distribution</i>			
Total	100	100	100	100
Professional	4	3	2	4
Proprietary, managerial, and official	4	*	1	*
Clerical	57	5	50	14
Accounting and semiprofessional	5	1	3	*
Stenography and allied	11	1	9	*
Other clerical	16	1	23	5
Sales	25	2	15	9
Skilled	3	1	2	3
Semiskilled	20	24	34	20
Unskilled	12	67	11	59
Servant and domestic	6	55	7	48
Laborer	6	12	4	11

*Less than 0.5 percent.

of them in Birmingham and 48 percent in St. Louis starting at this work, as compared with 6 and 7 percent, respectively, of white youth.

Limited occupational opportunity for Negroes is partly accounted for by inadequate educational opportunity. In some areas the standard of instruction is lower for Negroes than for whites.

However, even when Negro youth are able to get good educations they still have greater difficulty than white youth in getting the better jobs, or any jobs at all. In this study Negro youth in St. Louis actually had a somewhat higher average amount of education than white youth (11.7 and 11.0 years, respectively). In Birmingham Negro youth had a lower average amount of education than white youth (11.6 and 12.2 years, respectively). Yet Negroes in St. Louis were only a little more successful than Negroes in Birmingham in getting jobs above the unskilled and semiskilled level. Enabling Negroes to get better educations is a necessary condition for their economic emancipation, but by no means a guarantee of it.

The disadvantaged position of Negro youth relative to white youth is least when economic conditions are good and the demand for labor is expanding. At such times race is a less important bar to employment.

INDUSTRIAL GROUPS OF FIRST FULL-TIME JOBS

Because of their generally lower level of skill and lack of experience, young workers are limited to a smaller range of occupations than are mature workers. They are not so limited in the industries they may enter, because in most industries workers of widely different degrees of skill and responsibility are employed. The industry in which a youth finds work is also determined in part by the economic characteristics of the city in which he seeks work as well as by his vocational

preparation. The industrial distribution of all youth in the seven cities on their first full-time jobs is shown in table 16.⁷

Table 16.—Industrial Groups of Youth's First Full-Time Jobs, by Sex

Industrial group of first full-time job	Male	Female
	Percent distribution	
Total.....	100	100
Agriculture.....	3	•
Other extractive ¹	1	•
Manufacturing and mechanical.....	36	23
Transportation and communication.....	10	3
Trade.....	38	36
Public service.....	1	1
Professional service.....	5	10
Domestic and personal service.....	6	27

* Less than 0.5 percent.

¹ Includes forestry, fishing, and extraction of minerals.

Young workers were concentrated in two or three large industrial groups on their first full-time jobs. Nearly three-quarters of the boys worked in manufacturing and mechanical industries or in trade, the two broad groups being about equally important (36 and 38 percent, respectively). It may be said, therefore, that boys contributed chiefly to the fabrication and merchandising of goods.

Girls were represented in trade in about the same proportion as boys (36 percent), in manufacturing and mechanical industries somewhat less (23 percent), but in domestic and personal service a great deal more (27 percent). These three industrial groups together employed nearly seven-eighths of the girls on their first full-time jobs. Young women also were more highly represented than young men in professional service (10 percent as against 5 percent). The economic contribution of girls was thus more definitely in the fields of distribution and personal service than was true in the case of boys.

City Differences

Some industries, such as building and construction, have much the same relative importance in any city, although others, such as shoe manufacturing, are concentrated in particular cities. The presence of natural resources, proximity to markets, and the availability of transportation facilities are some of the factors determining the location of industries. Whatever the reasons for the industrial composition of a particular city, job opportunities are in fact largely

⁷ See appendix table 12 for a detailed breakdown of industry of youth's first full-time jobs.

determined by the types of industry located in that city.⁸ This is as true for young as for older workers. Table 17 illustrates how youth in the seven survey cities differed in respect to the broad groups of industries in which they found their first employment.

Table 17.—Industrial Groups of Youth's First Full-Time Jobs, by City

Industrial group of first full-time job	Bing- ham- ton	Bir- ming- ham	Denver	Duluth	St. Louis	San Fran- cisco	Seattle
	Percent distribution						
Total.....	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
Agriculture.....	1	1	3	3	*	1	4
Other extractive ¹	*	1	1	1	*	*	2
Manufacturing and mechanical.....	33	21	21	20	41	32	25
Transportation and communication.....	5	4	8	8	5	8	7
Trade.....	32	36	42	31	35	41	36
Public service.....	1	2	1	2	*	2	1
Professional service.....	9	9	9	8	6	6	8
Domestic and personal service.....	19	26	15	27	12	10	17

* Less than 0.5 percent.

¹Includes forestry, fishing, and extraction of minerals.

The proportions of youth employed in manufacturing and mechanical industries were greatest in St. Louis, Binghamton, and San Francisco. Domestic and personal service employed considerably higher proportions of youth in Birmingham and Duluth than in any of the other cities. The reason for this may have been the exceptionally low rate of activity in manufacturing and transportation in these cities during the worst years of the depression. Domestic and personal service probably offered the only chance of employment to many youth who in more normal times would have entered the basic industries upon which the economic life of these cities so largely depends.

The differences among the cities in the proportions of youth employed in the large field of trade were not great, on the whole. Such differences as existed were in favor of Denver and San Francisco.

EARNINGS AND HOURS ON FIRST FULL-TIME JOBS

The most widely accepted measure of success in the labor market is income. In certain fields, such as the professions and the higher levels of public service, prestige is sometimes felt to outweigh earnings as a sign of achievement, but by and large it is accepted that the more

⁸ The point is illustrated also by the way in which migration operates to distribute workers according to an industrial pattern almost identical with that of residents of the area of destination. See Webb, John N., and Westfeld, Albert, "Migration of Workers to Michigan," *Social Security Bulletin*, Vol. 2, No. 5, May 1939, p. 19.

money a worker makes the more successful he is. Income thus provides a simple quantitative measure of how youth fared on their first jobs.

The hours a youth works are also important to consider. If he works very long hours for an average or below average wage, his working conditions clearly are substandard. Likewise, very short hours may mean either that the youth has exceptionally good working conditions or that he is underemployed, depending upon the wage. Of course, many young persons willingly undergo difficult working conditions for the sake of future advancement. Nevertheless, for the bulk of the youthful labor force, it can be determined with some degree of confidence whether hours worked are those generally accepted as being reasonable.

Weekly Earnings

The first point considered is the question of earnings on youth's first full-time jobs (table 18).

Table 18.—Weekly Earnings on Youth's First Full-Time Jobs, by Sex

Weekly earnings ¹ on first full time job	Male	Female
	Percent distribution	
Total.....	100	100
Less than \$4. 50.....	9	3
\$4. 50-\$9. 49.....	12	21
\$9. 50-\$14. 49.....	27	41
\$14. 50-\$19. 49.....	33	28
\$19. 50-\$24. 49.....	15	5
\$24. 50-\$29. 49.....	7	1
\$29. 50-\$34. 49.....	3	•
\$34. 50-\$39. 49.....	1	•
\$39. 50 or more.....	1	•
Average.....	\$15. 40	\$12. 70

*Less than 0.5 percent.

¹ Includes an allowance for earnings in kind (meals, lodging, etc.) where these were furnished the worker.

Average weekly earnings of youth on their first full-time jobs were \$15.40 for boys and \$12.70 for girls. In evaluating the adequacy of these earnings, it must be remembered that some boys and girls were still living with their parents and so were not completely dependent upon their own earnings. On the other hand, some had to contribute to the support of their families and therefore had greater responsibilities than if they were supporting themselves alone.

The earnings figures presented here, it should be recalled, apply only to jobs that would generally be regarded as full time (30 hours or more per week). If part-time jobs were included, average wages would be much lower than those shown.

The average weekly wages of young men on their first full-time jobs were about one-fifth higher than those of young women. Of

course, some young women had higher earnings than young men, but the average expectancy was for lower earnings among young women than among young men. This sex differential in earnings persists as youth grow older.

Weekly Hours

The most usual hours youth worked on their first full-time jobs were from 40 to 44 per week. There was less difference in the hours worked by boys and girls than in the earnings they received (table 19).

Table 19.—Weekly Hours on Youth's First Full-Time Jobs, by Sex

Weekly hours on first full-time job	Male	Female
	Percent distribution	
Total.....	100	100
30-34.....	5	6
35-39.....	5	11
40-44.....	33	34
45-49.....	22	27
50-54.....	10	7
55-59.....	5	3
60-69.....	10	6
70-79.....	6	4
80-112.....	4	2
Average.....	46	44

On their first full-time jobs boys worked an average of 46 hours per week and girls 44. Half of the youth worked fewer hours than these, and half worked more. The majority of youth were thus on the job for more than the 40 hours per week now established by Congress through the Wage-Hour Act as a desirable maximum in most industries.⁹

One of the desires youth often expressed, when queried about their plans, was to continue their educations. The youth most in need of further education (aside from the unemployed) were those who were working long hours and receiving the lowest pay. Usually the most practical way for such persons to get more education was by attending night school, but long working hours made it difficult for them to do so. This is one of many examples of the way in which factors placing certain youth at a disadvantage in the labor market frequently reinforce rather than offset each other.

Earnings in Relation to Hours

Neither hours nor earnings considered alone are as good a measure of youth's position in the labor market as the two considered together. For example, many youth working short hours would prefer some

⁹ The youth in this study were interviewed before the Wage-Hour Act went into effect.

increase in their hours if they could increase their earnings proportionately. On the other hand, the advantages of high earnings were qualified somewhat if youth had to work an excessive number of hours for those wages. In table 20 average (mean)¹⁰ weekly earnings are considered in relation to weekly hours worked, and the two are further compared in a derived measure of average hourly earnings.

Table 20.—Weekly Hours and Weekly and Hourly Earnings on Youth's First Full-Time Jobs, by Sex

Weekly hours on first full-time job	Average (mean) weekly earnings		1 Average hourly earnings	
	Male	Female	Male	Female
30-34.....	\$12.80	\$10.50	\$0.40	\$0.33
35-39.....	15.80	12.90	.43	.35
40-44.....	17.50	14.00	.42	.33
45-49.....	16.60	12.80	.35	.27
50-54.....	16.10	11.10	.31	.21
55-59.....	16.60	11.40	.29	.20
60-69.....	15.90	10.60	.25	.16
70-79.....	16.20	11.00	.22	.16
80-112.....	18.80	10.70	(*)	(*)

¹ Computed by dividing the mean weekly earnings by the midpoint of each weekly-hours class interval.
² Not computed because of uncertain position of midpoint in 80-112 weekly hours class interval.

Average (mean) weekly earnings rose up to the point where youth worked 40 to 44 hours per week, and then declined. Much the same relationship is shown in the case of average (mean) hourly earnings. In other words, those youth who had the highest earnings worked only a moderate number of hours per week. Most youth who held lower paid jobs had to work longer than 40-44 hours per week.¹¹ Thus the disadvantages of low earnings were usually accompanied by the disadvantages of long hours and only infrequently were offset by short hours.

Earnings and Hours in Occupational Classes

Earnings and hours on youth's first full-time jobs differed markedly according to occupational class. One reason for these differences is that the occupational classes youth enter are partly determined by their sex, their race, the economic circumstances of their families, their education, and the ages at which they seek work. But earnings and working conditions in various occupational groups are much more than the reflection of these background factors. Other factors of

¹⁰ The median usually affords a better method of averaging earnings than the mean, owing to the exaggerated importance given in the mean to extreme cases. However, in computing average earnings by both occupation (or industry) and hours worked, it was not feasible to use the median because of technical difficulties of tabulation. In order to permit comparison with later tables of this kind, the mean is used in the present table.

¹¹ See table 19.

importance are the relative oversupply or undersupply of workers in particular occupational fields, the degree of unionization, State regulations, and whether there are other compensations in the way of prestige or attractiveness of the work (as in teaching). Some idea of the way in which wages and hours varied from one occupational class to another is given in table 21.

Table 21.—Weekly Hours and Weekly and Hourly Earnings, by Occupational Class of Youth's First Full-Time Job and by Sex

Occupational class of first full-time job	Male			Female		
	Average weekly hours (mean)	Average weekly earnings (mean)	Average hourly earnings ¹	Average weekly hours (mean)	Average weekly earnings (mean)	Average hourly earnings ¹
Professional.....	45	\$23.00	\$0.51	48	\$15.90	\$0.33
Proprietary, managerial, and official.....	59	23.00	.39	†	†	†
Clerical.....	50	15.60	.31	44	13.80	.31
Accounting and semi-professional.....	46	18.70	.41	45	13.10	.29
Stenography and allied.....	45	16.10	.36	42	14.20	.34
Other clerical.....	46	15.70	.34	43	14.50	.34
Sales.....	56	15.10	.27	46	12.90	.28
Skilled.....	47	20.10	.43	†	†	†
Semiskilled.....	49	16.50	.34	45	12.30	.27
Unskilled.....	52	16.60	.32	56	9.80	.18
Servant and domestic.....	56	15.70	.28	56	9.80	.18
Laborer.....	51	16.90	.33	†	†	†

† Average not computed for fewer than 50 cases.

¹ Obtained by dividing the mean weekly earnings by the mean weekly hours.

The highest weekly wages were earned by boys and girls in professional work and by boys working as proprietors, managers, and officials. The relatively favorable earnings in these types of work are one reason why so many young people are ambitious to enter the professions or to go into business for themselves. It must be remembered, however, that long, difficult, and expensive preparation is needed for entrance to the professions, and that this hurdle is insurmountable for many youth who would like to enter the field. Likewise, an important prerequisite for starting almost any kind of business is an adequate amount of capital, but even a small amount is hard for most youth to raise.

Failing a chance at professional or proprietary work, many youth next prefer any sort of clerical work. An important reason for this preference seems to be the greater prestige attached to white-collar jobs. Earnings and hours, however, are factors that should also enter into any evaluation of the advantages of particular jobs. From the evidence available here, it appears that boys fared rather poorly in clerical work, but girls made out well in it.

The average earnings of boys were lower in the broad field of clerical occupations than in any others, even unskilled. The relatively low average level of boys' earnings in the clerical field as a whole

(\$15.60) were largely a reflection of the wage levels in sales jobs (\$15.10). In the case of girls, however, earnings in clerical work were second only to earnings in professional work. The relatively high average earnings (\$13.80) of girls in clerical work were due in considerable part to the employment of many girls in stenographic and related jobs,¹² where weekly earnings averaged \$14.20.

The next highest paid occupations for boys, after professional and proprietary work, were those in skilled work. Young mechanics averaged \$20.10 for a work week of about 47 hours—\$4.50 more than clerks. Of course, the skilled field can usually be entered only after a period of apprenticeship or vocational instruction in school. And the work may be less regular than most kinds of office jobs. Nevertheless, in view of the relatively high earnings in skilled work, it would appear that many boys who now prepare for clerical work might find it advantageous to prepare for skilled work instead. This conclusion holds with especial force at the present time, when activity in the defense industries is providing many jobs for skilled workers.

The lowest paid group of young workers were girls employed as servants and domestic helpers. These girls earned an average of only \$9.80 for a 56-hour week, or 18 cents per hour. When it is recognized that servant work, in addition to low wages and long hours, usually involves less freedom than factory work, it is not hard to see why most girls avoid servant jobs if they can possibly secure any other. So long as wages are too low to compensate for the long hours and restrictive working conditions in domestic service, the best qualified young workers will continue to seek jobs in other fields, and employers will find a shortage of capable help. These are the economic relationships at the heart of the "servant problem."

Earnings and Hours in Industrial Groups

The earnings and hours of young workers vary greatly also according to the broad groups of industry in which they find their first full-time jobs. These differences are partly due to occupational differences, however, for the industries that represent extreme cases usually employ particular types of workers and not a cross section of all types. Table 22 summarizes the situation in each major industrial group.

The highest weekly wages (\$22.30) were earned by young men employed in extractive industries other than agriculture, i. e., in forestry, fishing, or mining. Most of these young men worked in logging near Seattle; both unionization and location in a high-wage area¹³ contributed towards raising their weekly earnings. However, they worked an average of 56 hours per week to make these relatively high wages.

¹² See table 13, p. 29.

¹³ See table 80, p. 114.

Table 22.—Weekly Hours and Weekly and Hourly Earnings, by Industrial Group of Youth's First Full-Time Job and by Sex

Industrial group on first full-time job	Male			Female		
	Average weekly hours (mean)	Average weekly earnings (mean)	Average hourly earnings †	Average weekly hours (mean)	Average weekly earnings (mean)	Average hourly earnings †
Agriculture.....	62	\$13.90	\$0.22	†	†	†
Other extractive ‡	56	22.30	.40	†	†	†
Manufacturing and mechanical.....	46	17.50	.38	43	\$13.20	\$0.31
Transportation and communication.....	51	18.10	.35	43	16.00	.37
Trade.....	53	15.40	.29	45	13.70	.30
Public service.....	48	21.30	.44	41	19.30	.47
Professional service.....	50	15.70	.31	44	13.10	.30
Domestic and personal service.....	56	15.30	.27	55	10.10	.18

†Average not computed for fewer than 50 cases.

‡ Obtained by dividing the mean weekly earnings by the mean weekly hours.

§ Includes forestry, fishing, and extraction of minerals.

Employment in the public service yielded the second highest weekly wages for boys (\$21.30) and the highest for girls (\$19.30). A work week of 48 hours for boys and 41 hours for girls was a further aspect of the relatively favorable working conditions youth found in public employment. These advantages help explain why many youth who in more normal times might prefer to enter private industry now seek government work instead. Other attractions that exist in many jurisdictions of government service are protection against arbitrary dismissal, sick leave and vacation privileges, and retirement benefits.

The two industrial groups employing the largest proportions of youth were, as noted above, manufacturing and trade. Earnings in these industries were consequently not far from the average earnings of boys and girls in all industries. It is interesting to note, however, that boys earned more in manufacturing than in trade, while girls earned more in trade than in manufacturing. This relationship is parallel with the one found earlier in connection with occupational groups: i. e., boys earned more in semiskilled than in sales work, and girls earned more in sales than in semiskilled work.

Youth employed in professional service had relatively low average weekly earnings—\$15.70 for boys, and \$13.10 for girls. However, only a few who planned to enter the more advanced types of professional work, such as law, medicine, and engineering, had finished their preparation by the time this study was made. Furthermore, many of the higher paid youth in professional occupations were employed in industries other than professional service.¹⁴

¹⁴ For example, in the industry table, chemists are classified under the industry in which they worked, and not under "professional service." On the other hand, "professional service" in the industry table includes some youth in semiprofessional types of work who were classified under "clerical" in the occupation table.

Agriculture and domestic and personal service were the lowest paid industries in which youth worked. Furthermore, these industries involved extremely long working hours: an average of 62 per week in agriculture, and 55 or 56 in domestic and personal service. One of the main reasons for these unfavorable working conditions is the unskilled nature of most of the jobs. In addition, these workers have little if any labor organization or State legislation to improve their working conditions.

Earnings and Social-Economic Level

Just as youth from families higher in the social-economic scale spend less time in the labor market before getting their first full-time jobs, so they earn, on the average, higher wages on their first jobs than youth from poorer homes. This relationship appears clearly whether the family's economic level is measured by the usual occupation of the father or by the section of city in which the youth lived at the time of graduation from the eighth grade (table 23).

Table 23.—Weekly Earnings of Youth on First Full-Time Jobs, by Usual Occupational Class of Father, Section of City, and Sex

Usual occupational class of father and section of city (rental area)	Average weekly earnings of youth on first full-time job	
	Male	Female
White-collar ¹	\$16.10	\$13.70
Skilled.....	15.30	12.70
Semiskilled.....	15.10	12.30
Unskilled.....	15.10	11.30
High rental area.....	16.00	13.80
Medium rental area.....	15.40	12.70
Low rental area.....	15.10	11.90

¹ Includes professional persons; proprietors, managers, and officials; and clerical workers.

The differences in favor of youth from families of higher social-economic level are the result of several factors, including the race of the parents, their income level, and the education they could help their children to obtain. In addition, parents in the higher types of jobs are probably in a better position than other parents to help their children find jobs. In general, youth who come from homes that can give them advantages before they seek work are in a more favorable position than are other youth when they do seek work.

Earnings and Education

As already mentioned, one of the ways in which youth from families of relatively high social-economic status are helped to obtain better paid jobs is through the superior education their parents can give

them. In table 24 it is shown that the more education a youth has, the better his chances of starting out at a higher wage when he goes to work.

Table 24.—Weekly Earnings of Youth on First Full-Time Jobs, by Education and Sex

Years of education completed	Average weekly earnings on first full-time job	
	Male	Female
8.....	\$13.10	\$10.80
9.....	14.40	11.10
10.....	15.00	12.00
11.....	16.00	12.10
12.....	15.60	13.50
13.....	16.40	14.40
14.....	18.50	14.60
15.....	17.30	14.80
16 or more.....	22.30	17.60

These differentials in earnings may perhaps not appear large enough to justify the expense and effort spent on increased education. On the other hand, it must be remembered that even in terms of earning power, these figures do not tell the whole story, since better educated youth are in a position to advance faster after they start to work.

It should also be noted that the rise in earnings was steady (except in the case of young men with 12 and 15 years of schooling), so that on the whole there appears to be a fairly certain and definite increase in earning power with more education. For example, a boy may expect to earn about 19 percent more per week on his first job if he graduates from high school than if he has only an elementary school education, and a girl may expect to earn about 25 percent more. Likewise the college graduate had about a 43-percent advantage over the high-school graduate in the case of young men, and a 30-percent advantage in the case of young women. Although this comparison is affected somewhat by age, it is nevertheless generally clear that the longer youth go to school the more they earn when they go to work.

Earnings and Age Obtained First Job

Just as a youth's earnings on his first full-time job are higher the more education he has, so his earnings tend to be higher the older he is when he first starts to work. Of course, older labor-market entrants are likely to be better educated than younger labor-market entrants. They are, therefore, doubly acceptable to employers—because of their better academic preparation and their greater maturity.

The general picture is one of higher earnings for youth who were older at the time of getting their first jobs. In the case of the young women, however, wages were slightly lower for those aged 22 than for those aged 21, and lower still for those aged 23 or over. This

Table 25.—Weekly Earnings of Youth on First Full-Time Jobs, by Age Obtained Job and by Sex

Age obtained first full-time job	Average weekly earnings on first full-time job	
	Male	Female
13 years and under	\$11.00	\$9.50
14 years.....	11.50	10.00
15 years.....	12.00	10.70
16 years.....	14.10	11.40
17 years.....	15.10	12.00
18 years.....	15.50	13.20
19 years.....	16.30	13.20
20 years.....	17.60	13.50
21 years.....	18.70	14.40
22 years.....	18.70	14.00
23 years and over	19.90	11.90

drop in earnings was probably concentrated chiefly among housewives and other late entrants to the labor market who were less well trained for employment than young women who entered the labor market (at age 21) immediately after leaving college. Young men who entered the labor market at 23 or over, however, had the highest earnings of all. Most of these youth had had graduate work in professional schools.

DURATION OF FIRST FULL-TIME JOBS

Four-fifths (80 percent) of these boys and girls had left their first full-time jobs by the time of interview, either because they went on to other jobs, or because they became unemployed or left the labor market. This fact suggests a low degree of job stability among youth during their early period in the labor market. The real test of youth's job stability, however, is the duration of their first full-time jobs. In table 26 the duration of such jobs is shown separately for jobs that had ended and for jobs at which youth were still working at the time of interview.

Table 26.—Duration of Youth's First Full-Time Jobs, by Sex

Duration of first full-time job	Ended jobs		Continuing jobs	
	Male	Female	Male	Female
	<i>Percent distribution</i>			
Total.....	100	100	100	100
Less than 3 months.....	26	37	7	7
3-5 months.....	23	21	3	6
6-11 months.....	20	17	10	10
1 year but less than 2.....	17	14	28	25
2 years but less than 5.....	13	10	38	38
5-9 years.....	1	1	14	8
Average (months).....	6	5	25	21

Full-time jobs at which youth were still working at the time of interview had lasted approximately two years, on the average. These jobs were thus not continuing jobs merely because the youth holding them had only recently started to work. Rather, a minority of young workers (one-fifth) held their first jobs long enough to demonstrate genuine job stability at an early stage of their careers.

However, four-fifths of the youth had either lost or left their first full-time jobs after an average interval of about 5 or 6 months. For the bulk of the new workers, therefore, job stability must be regarded as low. Either few beginning jobs were "steady" jobs, or else few were attractive enough to hold youth in them for any length of time. In either case, comparatively few youth found their niches when they first went to work.

FIRST PART-TIME JOBS

Not a few youth worked on a part-time basis when they obtained their first jobs. Part-time employment is of course difficult to define, since what is considered part-time work in one industry may be considered full-time work in another. Nevertheless, in order to obtain some idea of the extent of part-time employment among youth, the line between part-time and full-time employment may, with a considerable degree of reasonableness, be drawn at 30 hours per week. Of all boys and girls whose first employment was in private industry, one-sixth (17 percent) started in part-time jobs (of less than 30 hours per week) and five-sixths in full-time jobs.

In order to complete the picture of youth's first jobs, a brief description of beginning part-time jobs is given at this point. The description is limited, however, to part-time jobs of 15 hours or more per week, because information on occupation and wages was not obtained for jobs of less than 15 hours.

Occupational Classes

Some indication as to the nature of part-time work is afforded by a comparison of the occupational classes in which youth worked on beginning part-time and full-time jobs. On the whole, the differences in occupational classes were not great.

The occupational classes in which part-time workers were more highly represented than full-time workers were the professional, sales, and unskilled. For some classes of professional workers, e. g., college instructors, hours may normally be less than 30 per week. For other classes, e. g., musicians and private nurses, working hours may be low because the youth often obtain only a few days' work a week. A similar situation arises in the case of salespersons and unskilled workers. Extra help often is hired in stores for several hours a day or several days a week. Likewise, many jobs in unskilled laboring and domestic service are on a daily or hourly basis.

Table 27.—Occupational Classes of Youth's First Part-Time and First Full-Time Jobs, by Sex

Occupational class	First part-time jobs ¹		First full-time jobs ²	
	Male	Female	Male	Female
	<i>Percent distribution</i>			
Total	100	100	100	100
Professional.....	7	5	2	3
Proprietary, managerial, and official.....	2	*	3	*
Clerical.....	35	52	37	53
Accounting and semiprofessional.....	1	5	2	5
Stenography and allied.....	*	13	1	16
Other clerical.....	6	10	18	16
Sales.....	28	24	16	16
Skilled.....	2	—	3	*
Semiskilled.....	31	15	36	22
Unskilled.....	23	28	19	22
Servant and domestic.....	6	27	5	21
Laborer.....	17	*	14	*

*Less than 0.5 percent.

¹ Includes all first jobs of 15-29 hours per week that were not preceded by full-time jobs.² Includes the first of all jobs of 30 hours or more per week in which youth worked after leaving school, regardless of whether such jobs were preceded by part-time jobs.

Earnings

Weekly earnings on part-time jobs, as would be expected, were low relative to those on full-time jobs. This is a further indication that part-time jobs were poor substitutes for regular full-time jobs.

Table 28.—Weekly and Hourly Earnings of Youth on First Part-Time Jobs, by Weekly Hours and Sex

Weekly hours on first part-time job ¹	Average (mean) weekly earnings		Average hourly earnings ²	
	Male	Female	Male	Female
15-19.....	\$7.10	\$5.90	\$0.42	\$0.35
20-24.....	10.00	7.50	.45	.34
25-29.....	11.00	8.70	.43	.32

¹ Includes all first jobs of 15-29 hours per week that were not preceded by full-time jobs.² Obtained by dividing the mean weekly earnings by the midpoint of the weekly hours class intervals.

Average weekly earnings rose as youth worked more hours per week. A comparison of earnings on part-time and full-time jobs shows that weekly wages shaded into each other at the dividing point of 30 hours per week.¹⁵ Youth working part time thus had every financial reason to obtain regular jobs if they could.

In summary, part-time jobs were undoubtedly better than no jobs at all, but they can hardly be considered as meeting the needs of young workers. The majority of the youth who held such jobs may best be described as falling in a group having characteristics part way between those of the regularly employed and those of the unemployed.

¹⁵ See table 20, p. 38, and table 28.

Chapter III

YOUTH'S ACTIVITIES IN THE LABOR MARKET

THE ECONOMIC problems of youth are not confined to getting started in regular full-time jobs. In some cases the first jobs last only a short time, and therefore amount to little more than false starts. If the first job is in a field other than one for which the young worker prepared, he is likely to continue searching for more suitable work. Or, if he gets into a low-paid, blind-alley job, he faces the problem of finding work that promises more in the way of advancement. Even the youth who gets a good start may shift about a good deal before he considers himself established.

In order to understand the extent and nature of youth's early adjustments in the labor market, it is necessary to examine in considerable detail their activities between the time of getting their first jobs and the time of interview. In this chapter, therefore, attention is centered upon a description of youth's activities throughout the time they were in the labor market. Further information is thus provided on the question of how successful young persons were in the labor market and on the process of transition to adult workers.

NUMBER OF FULL-TIME JOBS

From information presented earlier on the duration of youth's first full-time jobs it was inferred that their job stability was rather low during their early period in the labor market. It would be expected that youth would continue to change jobs rather frequently, either because of unemployment, or else because of their desire to obtain higher paid or more congenial employment. The degree of their job stability throughout the survey period may best be judged by relating the number of jobs they held to the length of time they spent in the labor market.

Table 29.—Number of Full-Time Jobs Youth Held, by Time in the Labor Market

Number of full-time jobs	Time in the labor market						
	Total	Less than 3 months	3-5 months	6-11 months	1 year but less than 2	2 years but less than 5	5-9 years
	Percent distribution						
Total.....	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
None.....	9	51	28	18	10	4	2
1.....	30	42	51	47	41	25	19
2.....	22	6	14	22	25	23	21
3.....	14	1	4	8	13	17	17
4.....	10	•	2	3	6	12	13
5 or more.....	15	•	1	2	5	19	28

*Less than 0.5 percent.

As would be expected, the longer youth had been in the labor market, the more jobs they were likely to have held. This is shown most strikingly when comparison is made of those with the shortest labor-market experience and those with the longest. About half of those who were in the labor market less than 3 months had had no full-time jobs within that time, and 42 percent had had only one job; among youth in the labor market 5 to 9 years, however, only 2 percent had had no full-time job, 19 percent one job, and 28 percent five jobs or more.

The record is one of rather frequent job changes throughout the period during which youth's activities were studied. In one sense the implications of this record are unfavorable, as they indicate that few young workers found job security. On the other hand, youth's frequent changes of jobs show that opportunities for experimentation were open, and therefore that chances of advancement existed. In a labor market that was relatively fluid for young workers who had once "broken in," many youth, as will be shown later, did advance in occupational level and earning power.

AMOUNT OF FULL-TIME EMPLOYMENT

Perhaps the most important aspect of employment from the worker's point of view is its regularity. For even with a high rate of wages, he cannot make a satisfactory living if his work is intermittent. And reasonable security of tenure is essential if the worker is to be able to make plans for the future with any degree of confidence. Again and again the interviewers talked with youth who, bewildered and uncertain as to what they should do, were nevertheless sure of one thing: "What I want most is a steady job."

The extent to which youth approached full employment may be seen by comparing their amount of full-time employment with their time in the labor market, as in table 30.

Table 30.—Amount of Youth's Full-Time Employment, by Time in the Labor Market

Amount of full-time employment	Time in the labor market						
	Total	Less than 3 months	3-5 months	6-11 months	1 year but less than 2	2 years but less than 5	5-9 years
	Percent distribution						
Total.....	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
None.....	9	51	28	18	10	3	2
Less than 3 months.....	7	49	22	14	7	2	1
3-5 months.....	6	—	50	16	9	3	1
6-11 months.....	11	—	—	52	22	5	2
1 year but less than 2.....	19	—	—	—	52	18	5
2 years but less than 5.....	37	—	—	—	—	69	38
5-9 years.....	11	—	—	—	—	—	51

The longer youth had been in the labor market, the less likely they were to have had no full-time employment. Though early employment handicaps did not disappear entirely, they were usually outweighed in time by greater maturity. Meanwhile, another crop of youth—the more disadvantaged members of their age group—went through a discouraging period of work seeking in their turn.

To return to the question of how steady youth's jobs were, it should be noted that about one-half of the youth held full-time jobs for an interval of time equal to that of their labor-market participation. However, because of the broadness of the time intervals used in the preceding table, it is probable that some of these youth did not hold full-time jobs throughout their entire time in the labor market.¹ Perhaps the best way of summing up the situation, therefore, is to say that the average (mean) amount of full-time employment was 28.2² months, and the average (mean) amount of time in the labor market 39 months. The average proportion of time spent in full-time employment was thus about 72 percent.

Generalizing from the experiences of a rather varied group of young workers, the average expectation was for youth to spend somewhat less than three-fourths of their labor-market time in full-time jobs. The average proportion of full-time employment of course conceals many extreme cases in which youth either were employed throughout their time in the labor market, or else had never had full-time jobs. Nevertheless, it is clear from the average cited that there was a substantial deviation from full employment. In more concrete terms, there was a marked waste of youthful man power, with a

¹ For example, among youth who were both in the labor market and employed 1-2 years, some were in the labor market nearly 2 years but were employed only a little more than 1 year.

² This average includes "no full-time employment;" i. e., 0 months employed was considered the first class interval in computing the mean. The mean was used rather than the median because the mean may be manipulated algebraically.

resulting smaller output of goods and services for the community in general, and particular hardships for the youth who were directly affected by unemployment.

Differences Among Youth in Amount of Full-Time Employment

Even minor differences in qualifications for employment assume importance when jobs are scarce. These differences affect youth's chances not only of getting their first jobs, but also of keeping those jobs or going on to others.³ Youth's chances of being steadily employed thus depend a good deal upon whether they belong to the groups most in demand when workers are hired.

Differences According to Sex

Though boys and girls were almost equally positive in declaring their desire for steady jobs, the boys came nearer to attaining this objective than the girls. The proportions of time spent in full-time employment did not differ greatly, however, being 74 percent for the boys and 70 percent for the girls.

Table 31.—Time Youth Spent in Labor Market, Time Employed Full-Time, and Percent of Time Employed Full Time, by Sex

Sex	Average (mean) months in labor market	Average (mean) months employed full time	Percent of time employed full time
Total.....	39.0	28.2	72
Male.....	43.9	32.5	74
Female.....	32.8	23.0	70

The young men covered by the present study had about one and one-third times as much labor-market experience as the young women at the time when they were interviewed. This difference alone is an important reason for the smaller proportion of full-time employment among the young women, since beginners in the labor market usually have greater difficulty in securing steady work than more experienced workers.

It will be recalled, however, that among youth who entered the labor market before graduating from high school, the employment record of girls was somewhat poorer than that of boys.⁴ The relatively smaller amount of employment among young women was therefore due in part to sex handicaps, which operated most strongly among the youngest and least trained workers.

³ For purposes of measuring economic well-being, the amount of employment in relation to time in the labor market has much the same superiority over the level of employment at any given time that annual income has over the daily wage.

⁴ See p. 6.

Differences According to Education

It would seem reasonable to expect that youth with better educations would have more employment in relation to their time in the labor market than youth not so well equipped. Some evidence to this effect is contained in table 32.

Table 32.—Time Youth Spent in Labor Market, Time Employed Full Time, and Percent of Time Employed Full Time, by Years of Schooling Completed

Years of schooling completed	Average (mean) months in labor market	Average (mean) months employed full time	Percent of time employed full time
8	69.5	51.3	74
9	55.6	39.0	70
10	45.6	32.0	70
11	36.9	26.2	71
12	30.5	22.2	73
13	25.1	19.8	79
14	20.3	15.8	78
15	15.4	11.0	71
16 or more	11.0	8.4	76

The best records of employment were made by youth who had one or two years of college, or who had graduated from college. The poorest records were made by those who had attended but not completed high school, or who had three years of college.

The relationship between education and amount of employment is obscured somewhat by the fact that youth with the most education had, on the average, the least labor-market experience, whereas those with the least education had the most labor-market experience. Since "knowing the ropes" and training in school are both important in getting and keeping a job, labor-market experience and education are to a considerable degree interchangeable. Youth who had the best chances of steady employment were therefore those who had both some college training and also a considerable amount of labor-market experience. College graduates made a good showing because the advantage of completing college outweighed the disadvantage of short labor-market experience; with more of such experience as time passed their record of employment would probably become better than that of any other group.

Employment on July 1, 1938

When a group of workers, some of whom are employed and some of whom are unemployed, are compared at a given time for past employment records, it will generally be found that those currently employed had much steadier employment in the past than those currently unemployed. Among the youth covered by this study, those employed on July 1, 1938, had spent 78 percent of their time in the labor market in full-time employment; those unemployed on July 1, 1938, had spent only 44 percent of their time in the labor market in full-time employment.

Table 33.—Time Youth Spent in Labor Market, Time Employed Full Time, and Percent of Time Employed Full Time, by Employment Status on July 1, 1938

Employment status on July 1, 1938	Average (mean) months in labor market	Average (mean) months employed full time	Percent of time employed full time
Employed.....	43.0	33.6	78
Unemployed.....	35.9	15.8	44

One reason for the poorer record of past employment among youth currently unemployed is their smaller amount of labor-market experience, which of itself is a handicap in securing work. In addition, the same handicaps of race, age, education, or sex that lessened youth's employment prospects at the time of interview also operated in the period that went before. Since most employment handicaps do not disappear automatically with the passage of time, it is to be expected that those who are particularly subject to unemployment at one period of time will also be handicapped at a later period.

AMOUNT OF PART-TIME EMPLOYMENT

Because of family responsibilities some youth are unable to give more than a few hours a week to a job; other youth may temporarily be more interested in obtaining particular types of work experience than in getting adequate earnings. In such cases it is accurate to speak of youth preferring part-time to full-time employment. The majority of youth who take part-time jobs, however, do so only because they cannot get regular full-time jobs. Most part-time jobs are poorly paid, and many are in blind-alley occupations. However, because they carry with them at least some earnings and work experience, they are nearly always preferred to unemployment.

Table 34.—Amount of Part-Time Employment, by Time Youth Spent in the Labor Market

Amount of part-time employment	Time in the labor market						
	Total	Less than 3 months	3-5 months	6-11 months	1 year but less than 2	2 years but less than 5	5-9 years
	<i>Percent distribution</i>						
Total.....	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
None.....	70	76	76	74	71	67	68
Less than 3 months.....	9	24	11	10	9	9	5
3-5 months.....	6	—	13	7	7	6	5
6-11 months.....	6	—	—	9	7	7	6
1 year but less than 2.....	5	—	—	—	6	6	7
2 years but less than 5.....	4	—	—	—	—	5	7
5-9 years.....	*	—	—	—	—	—	2

* Less than 0.5 percent.

The longer youth were in the labor market, the more likely they were to have had some part-time employment. The youth with long

labor-market experience started to seek work at an early age, with relatively little education, and during the worst part of the depression. Many of those who found it difficult to get full-time jobs took part-time jobs in preference to being unemployed.

Sex Differences

Young women had more part-time employment than young men in relation to their time in the labor market. This is apparent when a comparison is made of the proportions of both sexes that had some part-time employment during the time they were in the labor market.

Table 35.—Percent of Youth With Some Part-Time Employment, by Time in the Labor Market and by Sex

Time in labor market	Percent of youth with some part-time employment	
	Male	Female
Total.....	29	31
Less than 3 months.....	19	
3-5 months.....	21	
6-11 months.....	24	
1 year but less than 2.....	25	
2 years but less than 5.....	31	
5-9 years.....	32	

For any given length of time in the labor market a higher proportion of girls than of boys had some part-time employment. Girls were more likely than boys to be in the minority group of workers that preferred part-time to full-time work. They were also subject to greater handicaps than young men in obtaining full-time employment, particularly during their early years in the labor market.

AMOUNT OF UNEMPLOYMENT

Nearly one-half (49 percent) of the 25,684 labor-market entrants obtained full-time jobs almost immediately upon entering the labor market. Nevertheless, nearly two-thirds (64 percent) of all labor-market youth went through some periods of unemployment as time went on. Not a few of those with the longest labor-market experience spent several years in unemployment. The longer youth had been in the labor market, the more likely they were to have suffered some unemployment.

The fact that the proportion of youth with some unemployment increased so definitely with longer time in the labor market is to be expected because youth with long labor-market experience had more time in which to be unemployed. This is not to say that workers with greater amounts of labor-market experience are more likely to be unemployed at any given time. Except among workers past middle age,

Table 36.—Amount of Unemployment, by Time Youth Spent in the Labor Market

Amount of unemployment	Time in labor market						
	Total	Less than 3 months	3-5 months	6-11 months	1 year but less than 2	2 years but less than 5	5-9 years
Total.....	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
None.....	36	55	53	46	39	34	23
Less than 3 months.....	17	45	22	20	21	16	12
3-5 months.....	13	—	25	16	14	12	11
6-11 months.....	14	—	—	18	16	15	13
1 year but less than 2.....	11	—	—	—	10	14	15
2 years but less than 5.....	8	—	—	—	—	9	18
5-9 years.....	1	—	—	—	—	—	3

longer participation in the labor market normally carries with it greater assurance of employment.⁵ However, job tenure is so rarely continuous, and changes in jobs so frequently involve intervening periods of unemployment, that even the most steadily employed workers are increasingly likely to have had some unemployment as their labor-market experience lengthens. It is scarcely necessary to add that for some workers, young or old, recurring or long-continued unemployment is almost a normal part of their way of life.

Section-of-City Differences

The amount of youth's unemployment bore a consistent relationship to their environmental advantages or disadvantages, as measured roughly by the rental areas in which youth lived at the time of graduation from the eighth grade (table 37).

Table 37.—Time Youth Spent in Labor Market, Time Unemployed, and Percent of Time Unemployed, by Section of City

Section of city	Average (mean) months in labor market	Average (mean) months unemployed	Percent of time unemployed
Total.....	38.3	7.0	18
High rental areas.....	32.5	4.8	15
Medium rental areas.....	38.5	6.9	18
Low rental areas.....	42.5	8.9	21

Youth who came from "the other side of the tracks" had been unemployed for a larger proportion of their time in the labor market than youth from higher rental areas. Those from low rental areas also had the longest labor-market experience, which in itself ordinarily is an advantage in obtaining jobs. However, in this case long labor-market experience indicates that the youth left school at an early age,

⁵ See table 67, p. 100.

and were therefore less able to compete with those older and better trained for jobs when they sought work. Once again, youth's "background" advantages or disadvantages are seen to be reflected in their subsequent employment history.

Race Differences

The insecurity of Negro workers may be summed up in the phrase "last hired, first fired." Not only did it take Negro youth much longer than white youth to get their first jobs, but Negro youth also were unemployed a greater part of their total time in the labor market than white youth.

Table 38.—Time Youth Spent in Labor Market, Time Unemployed, and Percent of Time Unemployed, by Race, Birmingham and St. Louis

City and race	Average (mean) months in labor market	Average (mean) months unemployed	Percent of time unemployed
Birmingham:			
White.....	32.4	6.9	21
Negro.....	36.0	10.3	29
St. Louis:			
White.....	42.5	9.0	21
Negro.....	36.9	12.8	35

Regardless of whether Negro youth entered the labor market earlier than white youth, as in Birmingham, or later, as in St. Louis, they underwent more unemployment than white youth. A major reason for this difference is that Negro youth were limited almost exclusively to unskilled and semiskilled occupations, where unemployment strikes heaviest. When the economy is operating well below capacity, as was the case during the period covered by this study, Negro youth bear a disproportionate share of the burden of unemployment.

AMOUNT OF EMERGENCY WORK-PROGRAM EMPLOYMENT⁶

As unemployment reached a high level during the early part of the depression, the conviction gained ground that it was a public responsibility to provide opportunities at useful work to persons unable through no fault of their own to obtain employment in private industry. The needs of young workers were provided for through the NYA and the CCC; and youth also obtained jobs on the work-relief programs operated under the FERA, CWA, and WPA.

Since unemployment was high through nearly all of the years covered by this study, youth's absorption into the labor market was conditioned to no small degree by the operation of the emergency

⁶ Includes Federal, State, and local emergency work-relief employment.

work programs. For example, many boys and girls who had not been able to get a start in private industry obtained valuable work experience in NYA training centers, at CCC camps, or on WPA projects, and as a result were better equipped to obtain jobs when they again sought work.

One fact that should be borne in mind in considering the amount of emergency work-program employment among boys and girls is that these programs have never been able to absorb all of the unemployed young workers desiring admission to them. An inevitable result has been that the longest unemployed, who are in greatest need, are usually given priority in emergency work-program employment. In this study about one-quarter of the youth unemployed 1 to 2 years, but nearly half of those unemployed 5 years or more, had some work-program employment. Table 39 shows the amount of emergency work-program employment in relation to youth's time unemployed.

Table 39.—Amount of Emergency Work-Program Employment of Youth, by Amount of Unemployment

Amount of emergency work-program employment	Amount of unemployment						
	Total	Less than 3 months	3-5 months	6-11 months	1 year but less than 2	2 years but less than 5	5-9 years
	<i>Percent distribution</i>						
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
None	87	99	95	88	76	59	52
Less than 3 months	2	1	1	1	3	1	—
3-5 months	3	—	4	5	4	5	4
6-11 months	3	—	—	6	7	7	4
1 year but less than 2	3	—	—	—	10	14	12
2 years but less than 5	2	—	—	—	—	14	27
5-9 years	•	—	—	—	—	—	1

•Less than 0.5 percent.

The youth represented in table 39 are the 16,445 who had had some unemployment during the period for which work records were obtained. They constituted nearly two-thirds (64 percent) of the 25,684 youth who had had some labor-market experience up to the time of the survey. Yet only 13 percent of them had spent some time in emergency work-program employment.

Of course, not all unemployed youth needed or wanted such employment. This was particularly true in the case of boys and girls who had had comparatively little unemployment, for these youth did not represent a serious problem of exhausted resources and need for training or rehabilitation.

Another factor making for a low proportion of emergency work-program employment was the financial limitations of the work-relief

agencies. As a result there has usually been a long waiting list of applicants to local certifying agencies.

Finally, it should be noted that many of the youth were unemployed during the early part of the depression, before the Federal work-relief programs were developed. In general, those who were unemployed later in the depression were in a better position to obtain emergency work-program employment than youth who were unemployed early in the depression. This point is brought out when a comparison is made by eighth-grade class of the proportions of unemployed youth that had any emergency work-program employment (table 40).

Table 40.—Percent of Youth With Some Emergency Work-Program Employment, by Eighth-Grade Graduating Class

Amount of unemployment	Percent of youth with some work-program employment		
	1929 class	1931 class	1933 class
All youth with unemployment.....	15	14	12
Less than 3 months.....	1	1	2
3-5 months.....	4	5	5
6-11 months.....	11	11	13
1 year but less than 2.....	21	24	25
2 years but less than 5.....	38	41	48
5-9 years.....	50	47	†

†Average not computed for fewer than 50 cases.

HOW YOUTH LEARNED OF ALL JOBS HELD

Brief mention was made earlier of the principal ways in which youth learned of their first full-time jobs. Most youth do not stay in the first jobs they get, but pass on to others relatively early in their labor-market careers. Their shifting about is sometimes voluntary, as when they seek better paid or more congenial jobs, and sometimes involuntary, as when they seek reemployment after losing jobs at which they wished to continue. In either case, they are faced with the task of finding new job openings.

Table 41.—How Youth Learned of First and Later Full-Time Jobs

How learned of job	First full-time jobs	Later full-time jobs
	Percent distribution	
Total.....	100	100
Friend.....	31	25
Personal application.....	23	24
Parent.....	11	4
Other relative.....	12	7
At school.....	7	3
Former employer.....	4	23
Employment agency.....	4	5
Want ad.....	3	3
Other.....	5	6

In one important respect youth were in a much better position to seek work after they had once been employed than when they first entered the labor market; that is, they could turn to their former employers for reemployment when business improved or for recommendations to other jobs. Also the more jobs young workers had had, and the more experience they had acquired, the more opportunities they had of obtaining jobs through former employers. This explains why 23 percent of all subsequent full-time jobs, as compared with only 4 percent of youth's first full-time jobs, were obtained through former employers.

As youth relied more heavily upon former employers to help them find later jobs, they turned less often to their parents and other relatives. Family help in finding jobs appears to be most important when boys and girls first enter the labor market.

Information obtained through friends and youth's personal applications to employers continued to be important ways of finding jobs after youth passed the first stages of job hunting. As in the case of youth's first full-time jobs, comparatively few later jobs were obtained through employment agencies, schools,⁷ want ads, or other means.

Although working conditions differed considerably on full-time and part-time jobs, the methods by which youth learned of the two types of jobs were much the same.⁸ In the discussion that follows, all jobs held during the survey period—full-time and part-time, and first and later jobs—are considered together, with attention directed to social-economic differences in how youth learned of the jobs.

Occupational Differences

Comparatively little has been known about how workers learn of jobs in particular occupations. Information of this kind, though available in the present study only for broad occupational groups, has a very practical value, as it gives an indication of how youth are most likely to obtain jobs in particular classes of occupations.

Considering all occupations together, youth learned of two-thirds of their jobs in just three ways: through friends, by personal application to employers, and through former employers. These three methods of finding jobs were important in nearly all types of work and must therefore not be overlooked when differences according to occupational class are discussed. Nevertheless it is the differences that show the special conditions affecting young workers' absorption into employment in particular occupational classes.

The most important ways in which professional persons differed from other workers in their ways of learning of jobs were that they

⁷ Youth could learn of later jobs at school if they had returned to school after holding a full-time job during a semester or more spent out of school.

⁸ See appendix table 13.

Table 42.—How Youth Learned of Jobs, by Occupational Class

Occupational class of job	How learned of job									
	Total	Friend	Personal application	Former employer	Parent	Other relative	Employment agency	At school	Want ad	Other
	<i>Percent distribution</i>									
Total ¹	100	27	24	17	7	8	4	4	3	6
Professional.....	100	18	30	18	1	2	7	7	2	15
Proprietary, managerial, and official.....	100	15	11	16	12	5	1	1	1	38
Clerical.....	100	25	26	15	6	7	7	7	3	4
Accounting and semiprofessional.....	100	27	19	15	7	9	7	9	3	4
Stenography and allied.....	100	27	14	9	5	7	14	18	3	3
Other clerical.....	100	25	25	15	5	8	8	8	2	4
Sales.....	100	24	35	17	6	7	2	2	2	4
Skilled.....	100	21	22	22	11	7	2	2	2	11
Semiskilled.....	100	26	25	22	7	9	2	2	2	5
Unskilled.....	100	35	19	13	7	10	5	1	4	6
Servant and domestic.....	100	39	16	10	5	10	6	2	6	6
Laborer.....	100	29	24	16	10	11	2	1	1	6

¹ Includes all full- and part-time jobs held during the survey period.

relied less heavily upon friends and relatives, and more upon personal applications and "other" miscellaneous means. Because of the specialized and responsible nature of many professional jobs, exactly suitable training or experience is relatively more important in getting the job than being the first to hear of the opening. In addition, some youth trained for professional work became self-employed, and their efforts to "set up shop" for themselves were represented under "other" means of learning of jobs.

Youth who became proprietors, managers, or officials also obtained their jobs most frequently by starting their own business establishments. However, it is worth noting that they also learned of jobs through their parents more often than other youth. This may indicate either that they were helped by their parents in establishing businesses, or else were taken into their parents' own businesses.

Youth (chiefly girls) who sought work as stenographers or typists used two methods of job hunting—schools and employment agencies—that were of very little benefit to other workers. In many cases these schools were business colleges, which usually make special efforts to place their students. The considerable use of employment agencies in the hiring of secretarial workers, when such agencies play so small a role in the case of other workers, appears to be due merely to custom. There is no reason why the services of public employment exchanges should not be more and more widely used as employers and workers become familiar with their activities.

Youth who worked as salespersons were more likely than other youth to obtain their jobs through personal applications to employers. Many large stores keep a record of the names and addresses of

applicants for employment so that they may secure help quickly during rush seasons. Likewise, many smaller shops obtain salespersons by displaying "Help Wanted" signs in their windows. It is practices of the trade, such as these, that often determine the particular features of how young workers are recruited for a given field of employment.

Owing to the intermittency of operations in many lines of factory, shop, and construction work, skilled and semiskilled workers were more likely to learn of jobs through former employers than were any other youth. Some skilled workers also had open to them a means of job getting that operated with considerable effectiveness, namely their unions.⁹

Finally, in the case of servants and domestic workers, it is important to note that they were more likely than any other youth to learn of jobs through friends or by answering or inserting want ads in newspapers. In seeking work as a cleaner, elevator operator, waitress, etc., the first to apply for a job is often the one to get it; consequently many youth obtained these kinds of jobs as a result of information friends had given them concerning the openings. Likewise, want ads are a much-used method of securing maids and domestic helpers; indeed, advertisements for such workers continued to appear in newspapers during the depression even when advertisements for most other types of workers all but disappeared.

Differences According to Earnings

Most of the methods by which youth learned of jobs were more important at some levels of earnings than others. This does not mean that youth who concentrate upon those methods of job hunting that are associated with the highest earnings will necessarily improve their own chances of getting well-paid jobs. Rather, young persons who are equipped by education or experience for better paid jobs are more likely to find those jobs in the particular ways indicated.

The higher paid jobs were more likely to be obtained through former employers, parents, and "other" means than were the lower paid jobs. The lower paid jobs were more likely to be obtained through friends, other relatives, schools, and want ads than were the higher paid jobs.

The greater extent to which youth learned of low-paid jobs through friends is largely a reflection of the fact that these jobs were more likely to be beginning jobs or jobs in unskilled occupations. Friends are of most help to young workers in the early stages of job seeking after leaving school, when other job contacts are not yet well developed. Friends are also of relatively greater help to youth seeking lower paid and less skilled jobs, where being the first to gain information of job openings is an important advantage in getting the job.

⁹ Classified under "other" in table 42.

Table 43.—How Youth Learned of Jobs, by Weekly Earnings

How learned of job	Weekly earnings on job				
	Less than \$9.50	\$9.50- \$19.49	\$19.50- \$29.49	\$29.50- \$39.49	\$39.50 or more
	Percent Distribution				
Total ¹	100	100	100	100	100
Friend	34	27	24	19	18
Personal application	20	25	24	24	21
Parent	5	6	9	10	10
Other relative	10	9	7	7	5
At school	4	5	3	2	*
Former employer	13	16	20	21	22
Employment agency	4	5	4	2	2
Want ad	4	3	1	1	1
Other	6	4	8	14	21

* Less than 0.5 percent.

¹ Includes all full- and part-time jobs held during the survey period.

Because of the association between higher earnings and greater amount of work experience better paid jobs were obtained more frequently through former employers and less frequently at school. The longer youth had been in the labor market, the more likely they were to learn of jobs through former employers, and the higher paid those jobs were likely to be. On the other hand, jobs obtained through school placement offices were nearly all beginning jobs.

The proportion of youth obtaining jobs by miscellaneous ("other") means was much higher in the upper than in the lower wage brackets. Some of the important ways in which youth thus obtained jobs were by setting up their own shops or professional practices, by seeking skilled work through their unions, and by applying for civil service jobs. Jobs in these fields, it will be recalled, yielded the highest earnings when youth first went to work.

Other Differences

In general there was little relationship between the occupational levels of fathers and the ways in which their children learned of jobs. The only noteworthy exception was the greater tendency among children of proprietors, managers, and officials to learn of jobs through their parents. Children of proprietors learned of 13 percent of their jobs through their fathers or mothers, as compared with 7 percent for all youth.¹⁰ Proprietors may be able to take their children into their own businesses; they also are likely to have a wide circle of business associates who may help their children find jobs.

Finally, there were differences in the ways white and Negro youth learned of jobs. Negro youth learned of a larger proportion of jobs

¹⁰ See appendix table 14.

from friends (38 percent) than did white youth (26 percent).¹¹ Negroes also depended slightly more than whites upon parents and other relatives for information about jobs. The greater reliance of Negro youth upon personal contacts for information about jobs was probably due to their predominantly unskilled occupational attachments. Because of the abundant supply of labor available in these types of work, recruiting for jobs is frequently by word of mouth, and those who are hired are likely to be the ones who first hear of the openings from someone "on the inside."

¹¹ See appendix table 15.

Chapter IV

SHIFTS IN LABOR-MARKET ACTIVITY

THE CHANGING demands of industry for workers, and the efforts of workers themselves to get better jobs, result in a considerable shifting about from job to job and from place to place. Young workers are especially prone to make these changes, because their efforts to get a start in gainful work and achieve a satisfactory adjustment frequently require experimentation with various jobs. Young workers are also freer than older workers to take the risks involved in changing jobs.

The work records obtained in this study make it possible to examine such questions as how youth transferred from one job to another, what jobs they obtained after a period of unemployment and how long it took them to find such jobs, and how their earnings were affected when they moved from one job to another. When prior and succeeding activities are related in this way, additional aspects of youth's efforts to make their way in the labor market may be observed.

The shifts discussed in this chapter consist of youth's moves from one job or type of labor-market activity to another, or between a labor-market activity and a non-labor-market activity. No shift was recorded in the case of a change from one non-labor-market activity to another, or in the case of activities lasting less than a month. Shifts from one full-time job to another were further identified by broad occupational class, and shifts involving part-time employment, unemployment, emergency work-program employment, and non-labor-market activities by the type of each activity.¹

TYPES OF SHIFTS

The average length of time that youth were in the labor market between the date of leaving full-time day school and the date of

¹ The degree of subclassification used in the tabulations of youth's shifts in labor-market activity is shown in tables 45 and 46.

interview was about 3 years (34.5 months). During this time they made a total of 111,450 "shifts," or an average of 4½ shifts per person. Three-fifths of all these shifts were of one of five types (table 44).

Table 44.—Types of Shifts Made by Youth

Type of shift	Percent distribution	Type of shift	Percent distribution
Total	100	Full-time employment to unemployment	13
Unemployment to full-time employment	16	School to full-time employment	10
Full-time employment to full-time employment	14	School to unemployment	8
		All others	39

Most activity shifts occurred when youth obtained or lost full-time jobs, changed from one job to another, or entered the labor market from school. The order of importance of the various types of shifts shows that absorption into regular jobs went on more or less steadily as youth continued in the labor market; for example, shifts from unemployment to employment exceeded shifts from employment to unemployment.

The net effect of youth's shifts from one type of activity to another may be seen when those shifts are classified according to the activities preceding and following them. In table 45 all shifts made during the survey period are distributed according to this twofold classification.

Table 45.—Activities of Youth Before and After Shifts

Activity	Before shift	After shift
	Percent distribution	
	100	100
Total		
Employed	45	62
Full time	38	51
15-29 hours per week	3	4
Less than 15 hours per week	4	5
Combinations ¹	1	2
Unemployed	23	27
Work programs	2	3
CCC	1	1
NYA	1	1
WPA	1	1
Other	1	1
Seeking work	20	23
On strike	1	1
Layoff	1	1
Not in labor market	31	11
In school	20	2
Housewife	2	4
Unpaid family worker	1	1
Illness	1	1
Other	7	4

*Less than 0.5 percent.

¹ Any 2 of the following activities carried on concurrently: employed full time; employed 15-29 hours per week; employed under 15 hours per week; CCC, NYA, WPA, and other work-program employment.

Since comparatively few youth returned to school after once leaving, the proportion of shifts from school to other activities was much

greater than the proportion from other activities to school. As a result, both employment and unemployment occurred more frequently after shifts than before. However, the excess of employment over unemployment was greater after shifts than before. This fact reflects the increasing success of youth in finding jobs as they gained experience in the labor market.

Because of their great importance in throwing light on the occupational mobility of youth, the 15,583 shifts from one full-time job to another will be examined in some detail.

CHANGES IN OCCUPATIONAL CLASS

When workers leave one job to take another they usually do so to improve their earnings, to get into work more closely related to their training or with "more of a future," or simply to find a more congenial place. Most changes of this sort are undertaken voluntarily. Some changes, however, represent an attempt to make the best of a bad situation. For example, faced with an actual or impending layoff, a worker may take another job that is inferior to the one he holds.

From a comparison of boys' and girls' activities before and after shifting from one full-time job to another, it appears that there was relatively little realignment among the broad occupational groups. Such differences as existed, however, were in the direction of more responsible and skilled work (table 46).

Table 46.—Occupational Classes Before and After Full-Time Job Shifts

Occupational class	Before shift	After shift
	Percent distribution	
Total.....	100	100
Professional.....	2	2
Proprietary, managerial, and official.....	2	3
Clerical.....	37	37
Accounting and semiprofessional.....	2	3
Stenography and allied.....	6	6
Other clerical.....	13	15
Sales.....	16	13
Skilled.....	3	4
Semiskilled.....	32	34
Unskilled.....	24	20
Servant and domestic.....	14	11
Laborer.....	10	9

The slightness of the changes in occupational distribution is due to the large proportion of shifts that canceled each other, or that were within the same broad occupational field. Canceling occurred mostly between related classes of occupations, e. g., shifts from semiskilled to skilled occupations and then back to semiskilled occupations, or shifts of some workers from semiskilled to skilled occupations at the same time that other workers shifted from skilled to semiskilled

occupations.² The other factor tending to keep occupational displacement low, namely the large proportion of shifts from one job to another in the same broad occupational field, occurred throughout the range of youth's jobs but was more pronounced in some occupations than in others. The extent of youth's shifting within the same occupational field and into others is shown in table 47.

Table 47.—Full-Time Job Shifts to Same and to Different Occupational Classes, by Occupational Class Before Shift

Occupational class before shift	Total shifts to full-time jobs	Percent of shifts to same occupational class	Percent of shifts to other occupational class
	<i>Percent distribution</i>		
Professional.....	100	56	44
Proprietary, managerial, and official.....	100	15	85
Clerical.....	100	65	35
Accounting and semiprofessional.....	100	33	67
Stenography and allied.....	100	66	34
Other clerical.....	100	38	62
Sales.....	100	32	68
Skilled.....	100	36	64
Semiskilled.....	100	55	45
Unskilled.....	100	46	54
Servant and domestic.....	100	50	50
Laborer.....	100	30	70

Several factors work together in causing so many youth to remain in the same occupational classes when they change jobs. To begin with, the range of occupations for which youth may qualify is narrowed to a greater or lesser extent by the nature and amount of their education and training on the job. It is unlikely, for example, that many domestic servants would be in a position to qualify for clerical jobs.

In addition, youth's motivations have much to do with the extent to which they shift out of their present occupations into others. Professional persons, for example, have sufficiently high earnings and prestige that they have little incentive to shift over into other lines of work, but rather devote their efforts to advancing in their own field. Thus 56 percent of their job shifts were in the field of professional work.

Proprietors, managers, and officials furnish the best illustration of a group that was less likely to shift about within the same field of work than to enter other fields. Proprietors who made a success of their enterprises had no reason to shift to other occupations. On the other hand, if they were not successful, they were usually prevented by lack of capital from starting another enterprise, and therefore had to turn to a different type of work. Thus, although only 15 percent of the shifts made by proprietors, managers, and officials were within the same field, 34 percent were to the clerical field—mainly to the

² See appendix table 16 for detailed information on occupational classes before and after shifts.

related field of selling (22 percent).³ It is interesting to note also in this connection that some reverse movement occurred: 6 percent of the salespersons, as compared with 3 percent of all youth, became proprietors, managers, and officials.

Unskilled laborers furnish another example of a group that was more likely to shift into related work than to remain in the same field when they changed jobs: 40 percent of their shifts were to semiskilled jobs, and 30 percent were to other jobs at unskilled laboring. It is particularly encouraging that so many youth in this low-paid group were able to rise in the occupational scale.

In summary, certain powerful forces, such as educational background and work experience, tend to hold youth in the same occupational classes when they change jobs. When youth do leave the field in which they have worked, however, they are most likely to obtain jobs in related fields of work for which their education and experience fit them. Shifts to unrelated fields of work are less likely to be made, except in cases where the prerequisites for getting the new jobs are few.

CHANGES IN INDUSTRIAL GROUP

Because most industries employ workers in a variety of occupations, it would be expected that youth would change industries more frequently than occupations. For example, a typist might hold successive jobs in a manufacturing concern, a doctor's office, and a department store without ever changing her usual occupation. Nevertheless, youth's job changes resulted in a comparatively small net displacement among the various groups of industries, since most of the movement into a given industrial group was counterbalanced by movement out of it.

Table 48.—Industrial Groups Before and After Full-Time Job Shifts

Industrial group	Before shift	After shift
	Percent distribution	
Total	100	100
Agriculture	2	2
Other extractive ¹	1	1
Manufacturing and mechanical	29	33
Transportation and communication	8	8
Trade	35	33
Public service	1	2
Professional service	6	6
Domestic and personal service	18	15

¹ Includes forestry, fishing, and extraction of minerals.

As a result of youth's moving from one job to another, the proportion employed in trade and domestic and personal service decreased somewhat, and the proportion in manufacturing and

² See appendix table 16.

mechanical pursuits increased. Many youth who had little specialized training or skill, and even some who were well trained for a specific type of work but who could not get placed, took fill-in jobs when they first entered the labor market, and then shifted to better paying jobs as soon as they saw their opportunity. For example, most boys who started working as door-to-door solicitors, and most girls who entered domestic service, earned low wages for long or irregular hours of work; they doubtless sought better jobs as soon as they could.

Many jobs in factories may be learned in a comparatively short time and are therefore open to youth with little training or experience. Furthermore, on youth's first full-time jobs, wages were above and hours below average in manufacturing and mechanical industries. The question that arises, then, is why so many youth who obtained jobs in the manufacturing industries entered them from other industries and not directly. The probable explanation is that employment in many of the manufacturing and mechanical industries fluctuates more than in other industries such as trade and service. Boys and girls seeking work when manufacturing activity was slack were therefore likely to find job opportunities relatively better in other industries. Then when manufacturing activity increased, they were attracted into those industries from other industries.

By no means all of the net increase in employment in manufacturing and mechanical industries occurred as a result of direct shifts of youth into these industries from trade and domestic and personal service. Some of the shifting was indirect, as for example, from trade to transportation to manufacturing. These relationships, and others of interest for the light they throw on youth's job mobility, may be seen

Table 49.—Industrial Groups Entered, by Industrial Group Before Full-Time Job Shift

Industrial group after shift	Industrial group before shift							
	Agriculture	Other extractive ¹	Manufacturing and mechanical	Transportation and communication	Trade	Public service	Professional service	Domestic and personal service
	<i>Percent distribution</i>							
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
Agriculture	19	3	2	2	1	—	1	1
Other extractive ¹	2	26	1	1	1	—	1	0
Manufacturing and mechanical	32	24	52	39	26	30	19	18
Transportation and communication	11	12	7	28	8	14	6	3
Trade	25	26	27	28	50	29	30	17
Public service	1	—	1	2	2	15	1	0
Professional service	4	2	4	3	5	8	34	4
Domestic and personal service	5	7	6	6	7	4	8	56

⁰ Less than 0.5 percent.

¹ Includes forestry, fishing, and extraction of minerals.

in a comparison of industrial groups in which youth worked before and after changing from one full-time job to another.

As in the case of occupational shifts, a large proportion of youth's industrial shifts were from job to job within the same broad industrial group. Youth already in a given field of work have an advantage over other youth, because of their experience, in obtaining jobs in that field. In some cases it would be more correct to say that young workers are limited to the same field of work because they have no experience in other fields.

If youth entered a different industry when they changed jobs, they were most likely to enter one of the industries that offered the greatest employment opportunities to youth generally. Young workers leaving jobs in agriculture were more likely to enter one of the manufacturing and mechanical industries than one of the transportation and communication industries. Indeed it is obvious that the direction of youth's absorption into the labor market (i. e., the industries they enter) is determined largely by the kinds of industries that are important in their community. In addition, some industries offer better opportunities to youth than others, and the proportion of workers hired may vary according to the state of business activity.⁴

SHIFTS INVOLVING UNEMPLOYMENT

Up to this point the discussion has dealt mainly with shifts from one full-time job to another. The shifts discussed next are those that involved unemployment. It may thus be inferred in what occupations and industries youth were most likely to be laid off, and in what occupations and industries they were most likely to find jobs after a period of unemployment.

The youth most likely to become unemployed after holding full-time jobs were those who worked in semiskilled occupations or as unskilled laborers. Since experience or special knowledge is at a minimum in these jobs, employers have little incentive to keep such workers on the pay roll through slack periods; instead new workers may easily be hired whenever business improves.

Professional persons, on the other hand, had by far the smallest proportion of shifts followed by unemployment. Indeed, self-employed professional persons can scarcely be regarded as exposed to the risk of unemployment, though they may be underemployed if they have few clients. Such unemployment as did occur among professional persons was concentrated chiefly in the salaried group. Even among salaried professional workers, however, the risk of unemployment is lower than

⁴ For example, in a town where railroads are a highly important source of employment, youth may be handicapped in getting railroad jobs during a depression because seniority provisions for layoffs and rehiring work to the advantage of older workers.

among other classes of employees, because technicians are often kept at work when operatives are laid off. Similar reasons explain why unemployment was relatively slight in the case of proprietors, managers, and officials, and semiprofessional workers.

When shifts from unemployment to full-time jobs are analyzed, a situation similar to that just described is found. Semiskilled operatives and unskilled laborers were recruited most often from the ranks of the unemployed, and professional workers, proprietors, managers, and officials least often. This fact indicates that youth were more likely to return to their old fields of work than to get jobs in new and unrelated fields after a period of unemployment. Indeed, this would be expected because the education and experience youth have acquired more or less determine the types of jobs they are likely to get in the future.

Table 50.—Shifts Between Full-Time Jobs and Unemployment, by Occupational Class

Occupational class of full-time job	Shifts to unemployment as a percentage of all shifts from full-time jobs	Shifts from unemployment as a percentage of all shifts to full-time jobs
Total.....	34	33
Professional.....	17	15
Proprietary, managerial, and official.....	24	16
Clerical.....	30	29
Accounting and semiprofessional.....	24	25
Stenography and allied.....	29	30
Other clerical.....	35	32
Sales.....	26	26
Skilled.....	36	29
Semiskilled.....	40	38
Unskilled.....	33	34
Servant and domestic.....	27	31
Laborer.....	42	38

When shifts involving unemployment are compared according to industrial group, it appears that youth working in manufacturing and mechanical lines of work were most likely to become unemployed, and that youth hired in the manufacturing and mechanical industries were also most likely to be drawn from the ranks of the unemployed. It is probable that a considerable proportion of these shifts were made by the same youth, that is, that a pool of labor more or less closely attached to the manufacturing and mechanical industries remained available for recall whenever industrial activity picked up. Of course there was also some flow of factory and construction workers to other types of jobs after periods of unemployment, and a similar flow in the opposite direction. The significant point, however, is that youth working in the manufacturing and mechanical industries were subject to a greater risk of unemployment than most other workers. This does not necessarily mean that factory workers had the greatest

amount of unemployment in a year, but that they had the most numerous periods of unemployment. Both seasonal and cyclical variations in demand, and hence in productive activity, cause employment in manufacturing and construction to fluctuate rather widely.

Table 51.—Shifts Between Full-Time Jobs and Unemployment, by Industrial Group

Industrial group of full-time job	Shifts to unemployment as a percentage of all shifts from full-time jobs	Shifts from unemployment as a percentage of all shifts to full-time jobs
Total.....	31	33
Agriculture.....	32	27
Other extractive ¹	39	31
Manufacturing and mechanical.....	44	40
Transportation and communication.....	37	34
Trade.....	30	28
Public service.....	37	32
Professional service.....	25	24
Domestic and personal service.....	25	29

¹ Includes forestry, fishing, and extraction of minerals.

CHANGES IN EARNINGS

The most important question concerning youth's job changes is whether earnings rose as a result. From a comparison of youth's weekly earnings before and after shifts from one full-time job to another, it appears that a substantial improvement did in fact take place. Changing jobs was thus an important means by which young workers raised their living standards. This appears most clearly in a distribution of youth's earnings before and after changing jobs.

Table 52.—Weekly Earnings of Youth Before and After Full-Time Job Shifts

Weekly earnings on full-time jobs	Before shift	After shift
	Percent distribution	
Total.....	100	100
Less than \$4.50.....	1	1
\$4.50-\$9.49.....	14	8
\$9.50-\$14.49.....	30	23
\$14.50-\$19.49.....	31	32
\$19.50-\$24.49.....	13	18
\$24.50-\$29.49.....	6	9
\$29.50-\$34.49.....	3	5
\$34.50-\$39.49.....	1	2
\$39.50 or more.....	1	2
Average earnings.....	\$14.90	\$17.00

Lumping all shifts from one full-time job to another, average earnings after shifts were about one-ninth higher than before. This general rise in earnings indicates that most youth changed jobs voluntarily in order to better their condition. Those who took

stopgap jobs to avoid unemployment would ordinarily not be expected to gain higher earnings as a result of such job changes.

Changes According to Year of Shift

The improvement in earnings went on steadily and at about the same rate during all of the years covered by this study. This is clearly shown when average earnings before and after full-time job shifts are compared by years (table 53).

Table 53.—Weekly Earnings of Youth Before and After Full-Time Job Shifts, by Year of Shift

Year of shift	Average weekly earnings	
	Before shift	After shift
1929.....	\$10.30	\$12.20
1930.....	12.00	14.50
1931.....	12.60	14.70
1932.....	13.10	15.00
1933.....	13.20	15.30
1934.....	14.00	15.40
1935.....	14.60	16.40
1936.....	14.90	17.50
1937.....	15.50	18.10
1938.....	18.30	17.90

Earnings at both old and new jobs rose steadily year by year as better trained youth entered the labor market, and as those already in the labor market gained in experience. These two factors so far outweighed the influence of general economic conditions that in all years from 1929 to 1938 average earnings after changing jobs exceeded average earnings before changing jobs by about 11 or 12 percent. Of course, it must be remembered that only youth who held full-time jobs are considered here. Depressed business conditions are manifested less clearly among a group which demonstrated its favored position in the labor market by changing from one job directly to another.

Changes According to Occupational Class

Youth's average occupational level rose slightly, and their wage level considerably, as a result of their shifts from job to job. In some cases youth gained higher earnings even though they changed to jobs generally regarded as lower in the occupational scale. It is of considerable importance, therefore, to see what types of broad occupational shifts resulted in the greatest improvement in earnings.

As a basis of comparison for the analysis that follows, it may be noted that 60 percent of youth's shifts from one full-time job to another resulted in higher earnings, 12 percent in the same earnings, and 28 percent in lower earnings. Thus a majority of youth were able to secure better paying jobs as they gained in work experience, maturity, and knowledge of what jobs were available and how to secure them.

In table 54 the different kinds of broad occupational shifts made are ranked in order of the proportion of youth who gained wage increases.

Table 54.—Changes in Wage Levels, by Occupational Class Before and After Shifts

Shift in occupational class ¹	Change in wage level		
	Percent higher	Percent same	Percent lower
Semiskilled to skilled.....	77	4	19
Clerical to proprietor.....	73	5	22
Clerical to skilled.....	71	10	19
Clerical to semiskilled.....	70	8	22
Clerical to unskilled.....	66	7	27
Clerical to clerical.....	64	15	21
Unskilled to semiskilled.....	62	7	31
Skilled to skilled.....	61	16	23
Semiskilled to semiskilled.....	61	14	25
Professional to professional.....	60	10	30
Clerical to professional.....	59	12	29
Unskilled to skilled.....	59	9	32
Semiskilled to proprietor.....	58	4	38
Semiskilled to clerical.....	57	10	33
Semiskilled to professional.....	54	9	37
Semiskilled to unskilled.....	53	8	39
Skilled to semiskilled.....	53	7	40
Unskilled to clerical.....	52	9	39
Unskilled to proprietor.....	51	7	42
Proprietor to semiskilled.....	51	5	44
Unskilled to unskilled.....	50	20	30
Proprietor to clerical.....	44	12	44
Skilled to clerical.....	42	11	47
Skilled to unskilled.....	42	8	50

¹ Includes only shifts involving 50 cases or more.

The best record of improved earnings was made by youth who left semiskilled jobs to take skilled jobs; more than three-fourths of their job shifts brought higher wages. Some of these youth stepped into higher paid jobs upon the completion of their apprenticeship. Others picked up enough knowledge in an informal way to qualify for more skilled work. There is encouragement in these figures for the boy who wishes to enter a skilled trade but who cannot acquire sufficient training in school to do so, for he stands a fairly good chance of advancing to the higher earnings accompanying a skilled job through a semi-skilled job.

The five next greatest increases in earnings were made by youth who left jobs in the clerical field. The rise in earnings when these youth became proprietors, skilled, semiskilled, or unskilled workers might suggest that the best way for young clerical workers to better their earnings was to leave the field of clerical work. However, a large proportion (64 percent) of the shifts from one clerical job to another also resulted in improved earnings; this fact indicates that wages in clerical work vary so greatly that youth have considerable scope for raising their earning power even within that field.

In only three types of shifts for which sufficient data were available were the proportions of youth enjoying a gain in earning power less than 50 percent. These shifts were from proprietor to clerical worker, from skilled to clerical worker, and from skilled to unskilled worker. The most unfavorable showing was made by workers who shifted from skilled to unskilled jobs. Yet, even in this case, only 50 percent had lower earnings, and 42 percent had higher earnings.

The rise in earnings among these youth thus was general and not limited to a few particular occupational classes. To be sure, the highest proportion of wage increases went to youth whose job changes carried them higher in the occupational scale (as from semiskilled to skilled work), and the lowest proportion to those who slipped back to a lower occupational classification (as from skilled to unskilled work). Nevertheless, in several cases the proportion of wage increases exceeded the proportion of wage decreases even though youth changed from a "higher" to a "lower" job, e. g., from semiskilled to unskilled, or from skilled to semiskilled. And in all but 3 of the 24 types of occupational shifts considered, the proportion of wage increases exceeded the proportion of wage decreases.

The general rise in earnings is to be expected because most shifts from one full-time job to another are made voluntarily to get higher wages. The interesting point is that wage increases were gained as a result of such widely different types of job changes. This fact suggests that youth's immediate economic interests may be served even if they accept jobs in fields not closely related to, or not "above," their present field of work. It is less certain, however, that their ultimate economic interests are best served if they give primary consideration to current earnings, for economic well-being depends on steady employment and prospects for advancement as well as on a high weekly wage in the immediate present.

DURATION OF EMPLOYMENT AND UNEMPLOYMENT

In the period when youth are still comparative newcomers in the labor market, many of them have difficulty in holding jobs and in getting other jobs. For one thing, recently hired workers have less experience and seniority than older workers. For another, beginners are less well acquainted with employment opportunities and are in a poorer position than experienced workers to secure other jobs if they lose or leave their jobs. Information on the duration of youth's employment preceding other jobs and periods of unemployment shows how the newcomers were handicapped in passing on to other jobs.

Youth who left one job to take another had a longer record of employment preceding their shifts than youth who became unemployed. Earlier it was stated that one of youth's most difficult problems is getting their first full-time jobs when they have little or no

Table 55.—Duration of Youth's Employment Preceding Shifts to Full-Time Employment and Unemployment

Cumulative duration ¹ of employment preceding shifts	Shifts to full-time jobs	Shifts to unemployment
	Percent distribution	
Total	100	100
Less than 3 months.....	16	24
3-5 months.....	20	27
6-11 months.....	21	22
1 year but less than 2.....	22	15
2 years but less than 5.....	19	11
5-9 years.....	2	1
Average months' duration	10	5

¹ Total amount of continuous employment (full-time and part-time) preceding shifts.

experience to offer. It may be concluded now that they are still subject to a considerable risk of unemployment during their early period in the labor market even though they have passed the initial stages of job hunting. With a greater amount of work experience they are more likely to shift to other jobs and less likely to become unemployed.

A matter of considerable importance in evaluating youth's success in the labor market is the average amount of unemployment before they obtain full-time private jobs. When a census is taken it is possible to ask unemployed workers how long they have been without jobs, but such information does not indicate what the total duration of their unemployment will be before they get jobs. An analysis of the amount of unemployment preceding shifts to jobs does, however, give the information desired.

Table 56.—Duration of Youth's Unemployment Preceding Shifts to Full-Time Jobs

Duration of unemployment preceding shifts to full-time jobs	Percent distribution	Duration of unemployment preceding shifts to full-time jobs	Percent distribution
Total	100	1 year but less than 2.....	9
Less than 3 months.....	41	2 years but less than 5.....	4
3-5 months.....	28	5-9 years.....	•
6-11 months.....	18	Average months' duration	3

*Less than 0.5 percent.

Averaging the experience of all youth who obtained full-time jobs after periods of unemployment, it may be said that most youth fell outside the ranks of the long unemployed. The average duration of unemployment was 3 months. About seven-eighths of the unemployment periods lasted less than a year. However, the fact that one-eighth of the unemployment periods lasted a year or more reflects a serious situation among some of our youth. Certain major handicaps leading to the long unemployment of these young workers have already been mentioned in this report.

Chapter V

TRENDS IN LABOR-MARKET ACTIVITIES

IN THE preceding discussions of youth's efforts to get started in gainful work and of their varied activities while in the labor market, the degree of their progress at various stages was considered only incidentally. In the present chapter attention is directed principally to this question. The main devices used for investigating trends in youth's labor-market experiences are time-series analyses of their activities on each birthday, and comparisons of their first jobs with the jobs they held at or near the time of interview.

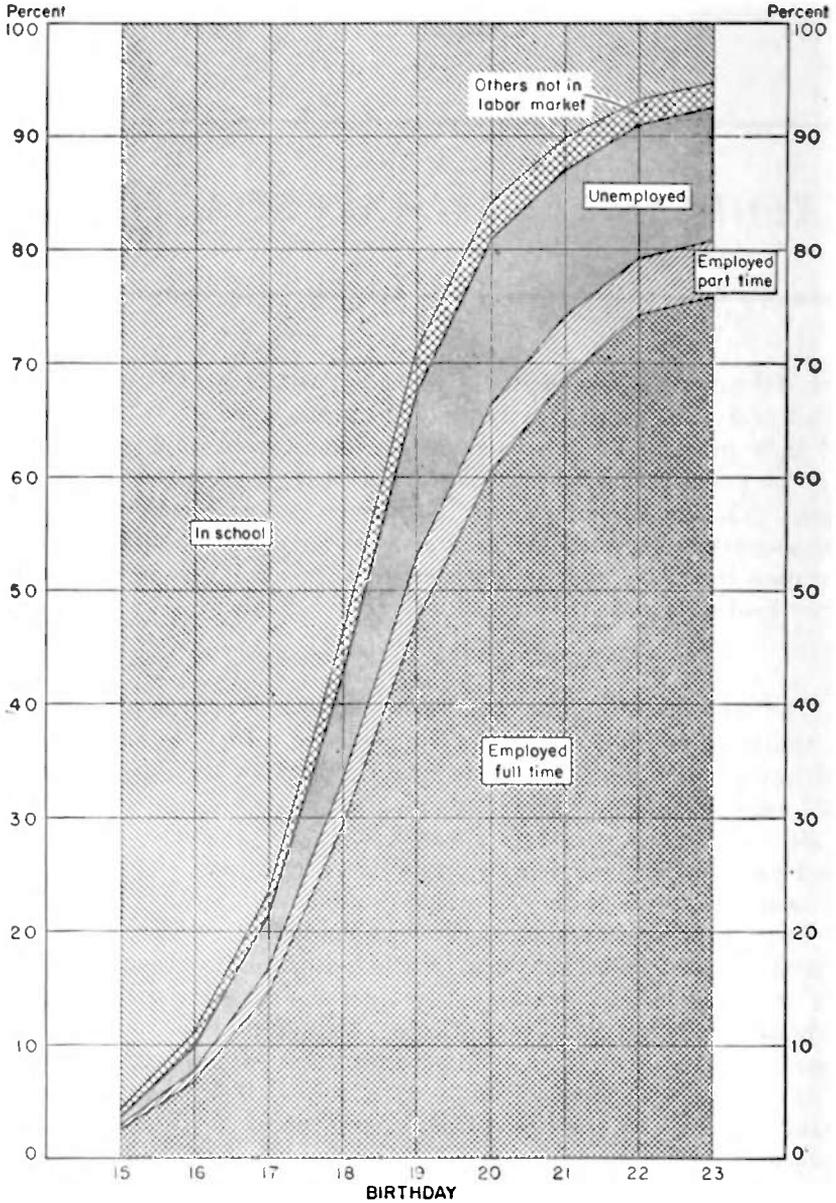
ACTIVITIES ON EACH BIRTHDAY

The time-series charts used earlier in this report dealt with the activities of youth each month after graduation from the eighth grade. However, since some youth made faster progress than others, it was not easy to infer the relative importance of various activities at different ages. A consideration at this point of the activities of boys and girls on each birthday gives a more complete picture of their economic progress as they approached adulthood.

By way of introduction, it should be noted that when a youth engaged in two or more activities on a given birthday, the one at which he spent the largest number of hours per week was considered his primary activity for that period. The time-series charts show youth's activities from their fifteenth to their twenty-third birthdays only, because youth could not have attained their twenty-fourth or later birthdays by the time of interview without being educationally retarded.¹ The data for these later birthdays are heavily weighted by the experiences of retarded youth, and would overstate the extent

¹ At best, such youth could have graduated from the eighth grade in 1929 at the age of 15 or over.

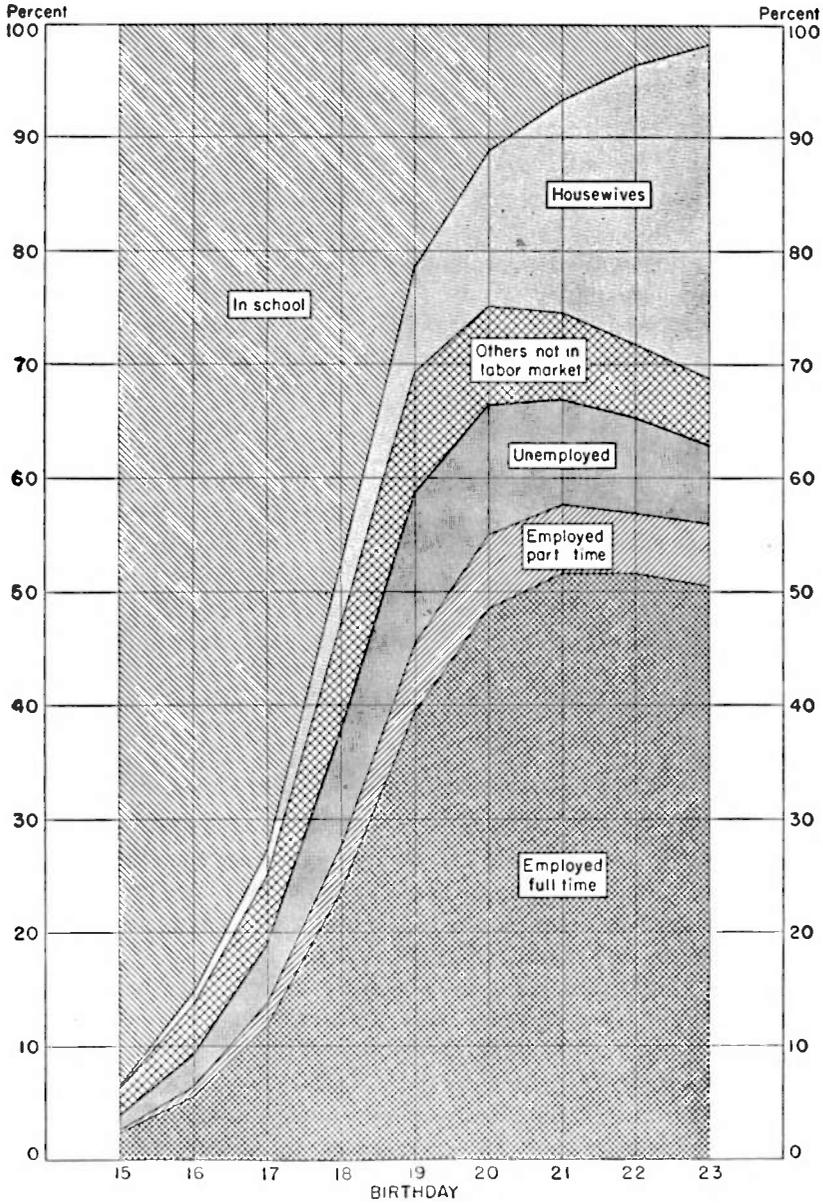
Fig. 7—ACTIVITIES ON EACH BIRTHDAY OF MALE LABOR-MARKET ENTRANTS OF THE 1929, 1931 AND 1933 CLASSES



Source: Appendix table 17.

WPA 3877

Fig. 8—ACTIVITIES ON EACH BIRTHDAY OF FEMALE LABOR-MARKET ENTRANTS OF THE 1929, 1931 AND 1933 CLASSES



Source: Appendix table 17.

WPA 3878

of unemployment and less skilled employment. In addition, the time series of activities on each birthday includes only youth who had at some time entered the labor market, although those from the three eighth-grade graduating classes are considered together. Figures 7 and 8 show the proportion of youth that were engaged in the major types of labor- and non-labor-market activities on successive birthdays.

Youth in School

On their fifteenth birthdays 96 percent of the boys were still in school, but by their twenty-third birthdays only 5 percent were still in school. An even more rapid decline in school attendance occurred in the case of the girls, for at each age fewer girls than boys were attending school. Though the fact of youth's transition from student to worker or homemaker within the age limits discussed here is well known, its quickness and completeness are not always fully recognized. The birthday activity charts vividly illustrate the magnitude of that adjustment process.

Housewives

The proportion of girls engaged as homemakers rose steadily from almost zero at age 15 to 29 percent at age 23. Some of these girls became housewives before entering the labor market, but most did so after having entered. The proportion of girls who were in the labor market was at a maximum (66 percent) at ages 20 and 21; above 21 the proportion declined, owing to the heavy withdrawal of girls who became homemakers. Girls who remained in the labor market after they were 21 thus faced less and less competition for jobs from other girls of their own age group.

Employment Status of Youth in the Labor Market

The incidence of unemployment at different ages may best be seen when youth in the labor market are studied as a separate group. In figures 9 and 10 and appendix table 18, therefore, the proportions of youth employed or unemployed at each age are shown, in relation to those who were in the labor market at that time.

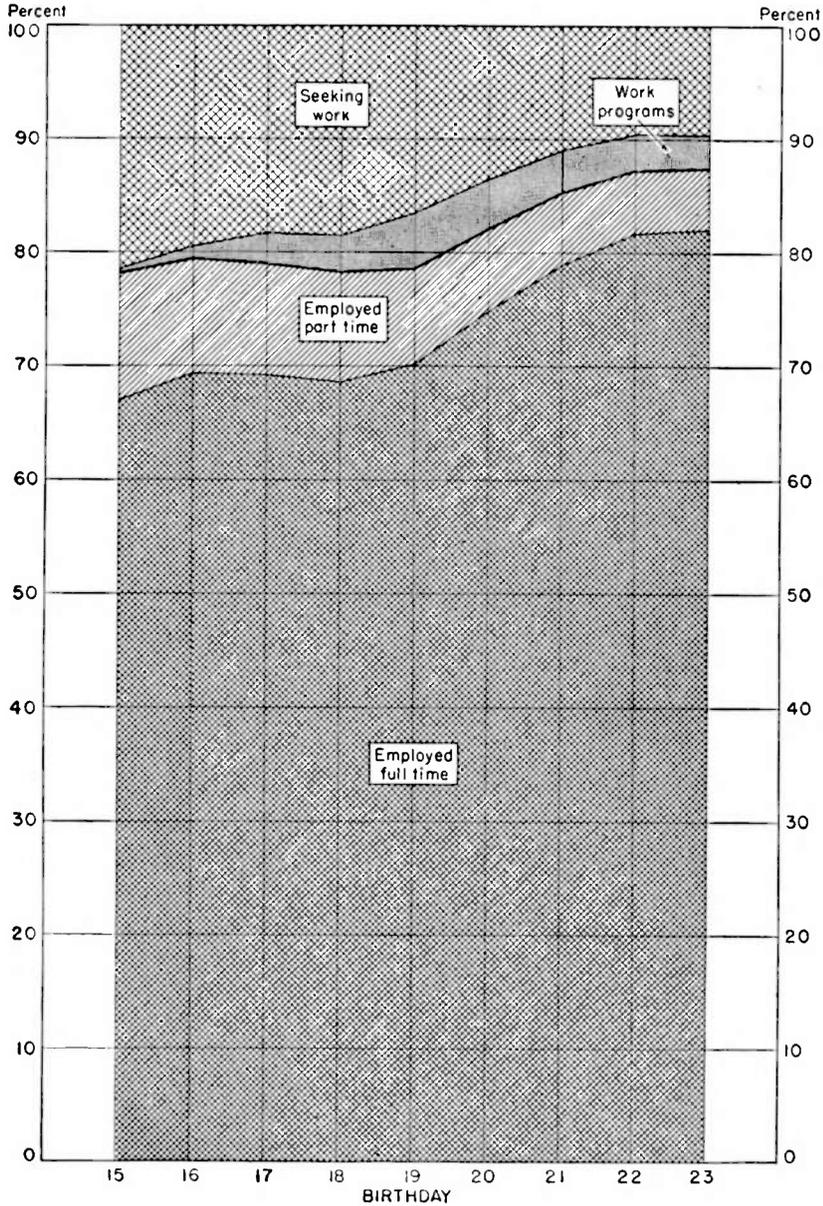
The most important point to note in the case of both boys and girls is that the youngest workers were the ones most subject to unemployment. The rate of unemployment did not fall below 20 percent until youth reached their twentieth birthdays. The earliest labor-market entrants were handicapped by youthfulness, inexperience, inadequate education, and in some cases by disadvantaged social-economic backgrounds. In time many of these early labor-market entrants outgrew their handicaps of inexperience and youthfulness, and other youth, older and better educated, entered the labor force. As a result the rate of unemployment fell. Even at age 23, however,



Work Projects Administration (Moxom).

Homemaker.

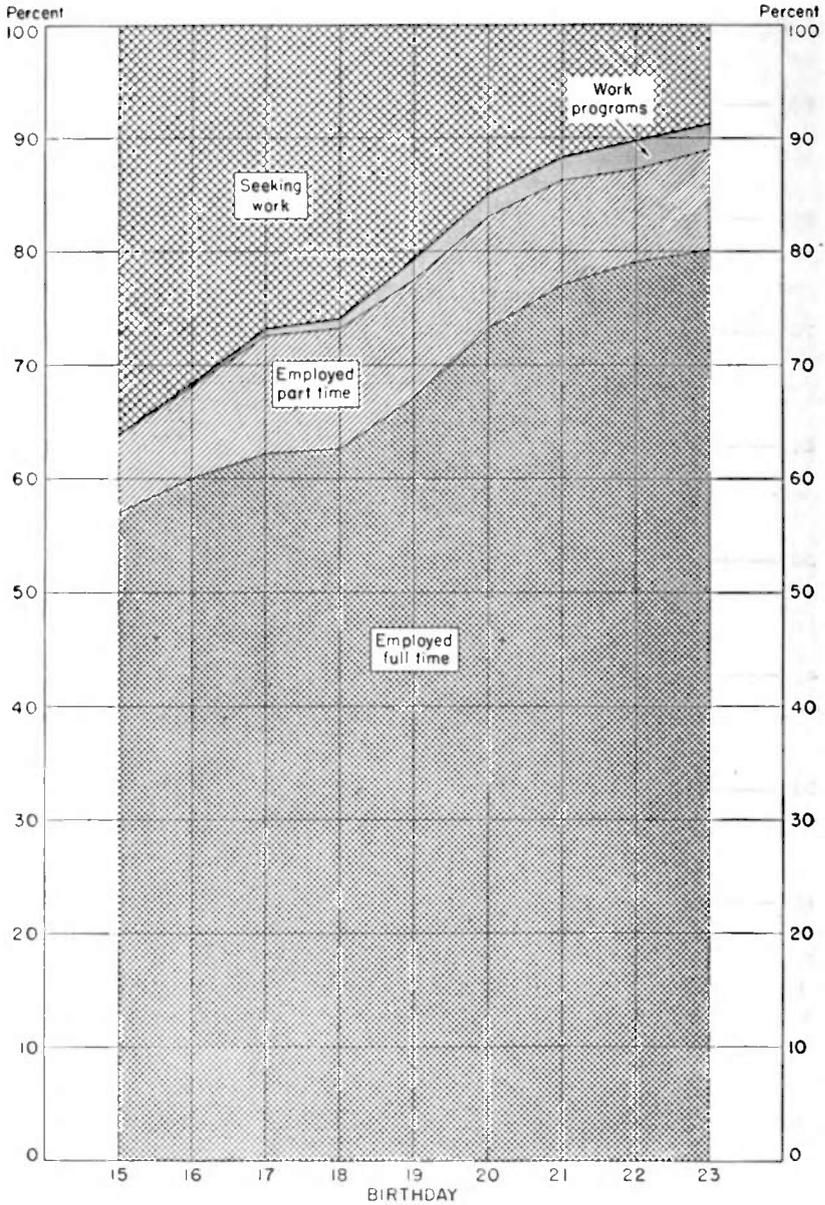
Fig. 9—EMPLOYMENT STATUS ON EACH BIRTHDAY OF MALES IN THE LABOR MARKET, 1929, 1931, AND 1933 CLASSES



Source Appendix table 18.

WPA 3879

Fig. 10—EMPLOYMENT STATUS ON EACH BIRTHDAY OF FEMALES IN THE LABOR MARKET 1929, 1931, AND 1933 CLASSES



Source: Appendix table 18.

WPA 3880

one-eighth to one-ninth of the workers were unemployed. Thus, although employment handicaps lessened considerably as youth grew older, the improvement was not sufficient to justify the belief that youth's unemployment was becoming a negligible problem.

The decline in unemployment as youth grew older followed different patterns in the case of boys and girls. Among boys unemployment was fairly constant (21 or 22 percent) at ages 15 through 19, and thereafter declined until it reached 13 percent at ages 22 and 23. Among girls, on the other hand, unemployment dropped steadily from 36 percent at age 15 to 11 percent at age 23. Up to the age of 19, therefore, girls were much more handicapped than boys in getting jobs, but from their nineteenth birthday on, girls and boys were about equally subject to unemployment. The most probable reason for the steady improvement in the employment prospects of girls is that increasing numbers of them withdrew from the labor market to become housewives and thereby lessened the competition for jobs among girls of the same age group still in the labor market.

In view of the especially severe unemployment among the youngest boys and girls, it might be expected that a considerable proportion would have had work-program employment. That such was not the case among the youth in this study is mainly due to the fact that many went through their early unemployment before the work programs were initiated. In addition, youth were not eligible for WPA employment or NYA out-of-school employment until they reached the age of 18.

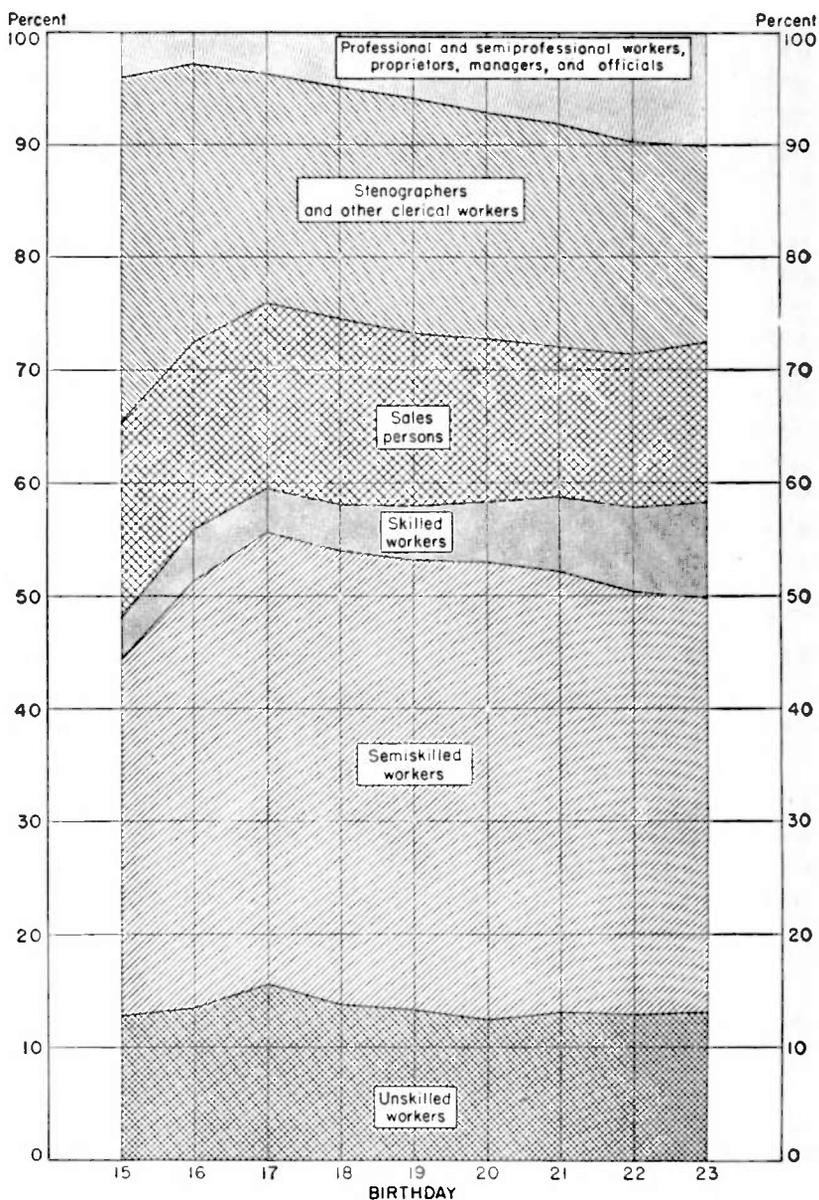
Occupational Classes of Youth Employed Full Time

Youth's changing occupational attachments at different ages are nowhere better shown than in a comparison of the relative importance of the different classes of occupations in which they worked on successive birthdays. The changes in occupational distribution are due partly to youth's shifting about from job to job, partly to the later entrance into the labor market of better trained youth, and partly to the withdrawal of girls to become housewives.

Two broad occupational classes among the boys stood out as showing the most consistent gains as boys grew older—professional persons, proprietors, managers, and officials; and skilled workers. At no time, however, did these fields employ more than a small proportion of the boys. The proportion of professional, proprietary, and managerial workers increased only from 4 percent at age 15 to 10 percent at age 23; the proportion of skilled workers increased from 4 to 9 percent.² Though the increase in these groups is encouraging, it can be seen that only a minority of boys were able to work into these jobs or enter them from school.

² See appendix table 19.

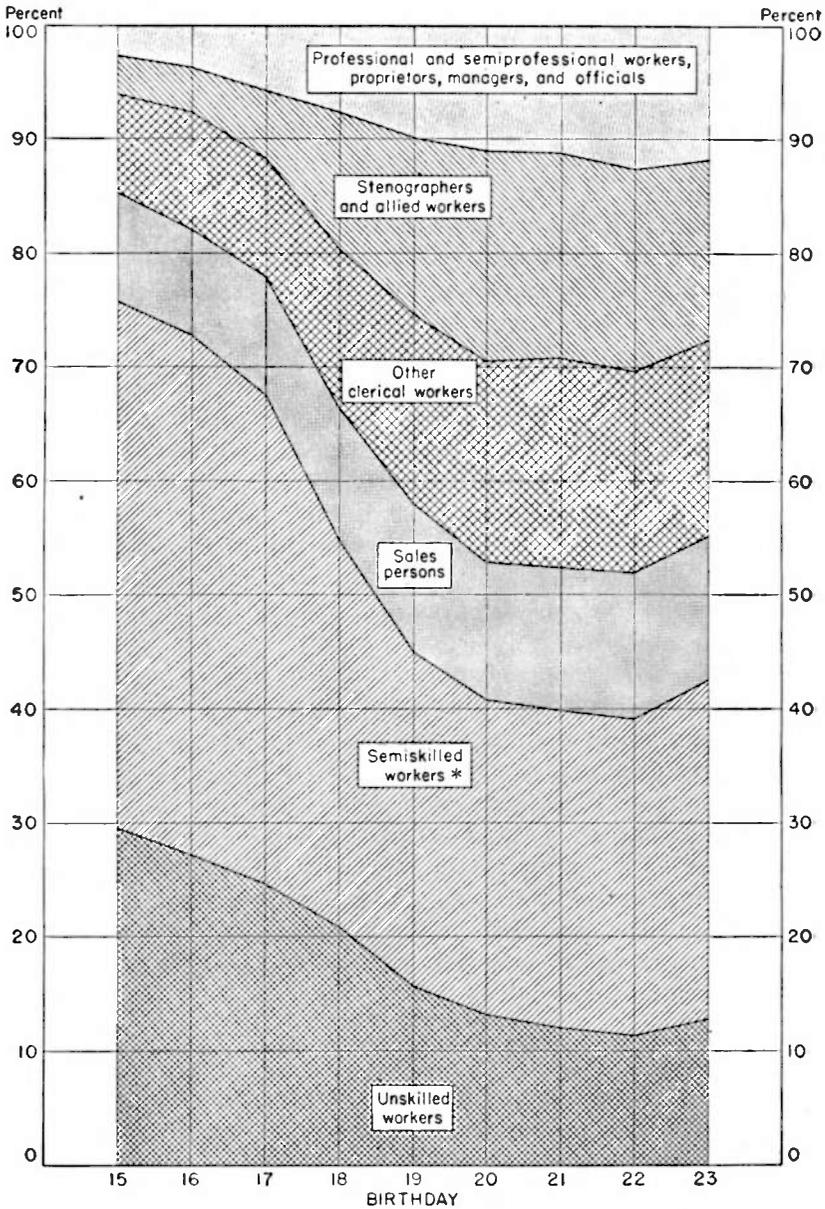
Fig. II—OCCUPATION OF MALES EMPLOYED FULL TIME ON EACH BIRTHDAY, 1929, 1931 AND 1933 CLASSES



Source: Appendix table 19.

WPA 3881

Fig. 12 – OCCUPATION OF FEMALES EMPLOYED FULL TIME ON EACH BIRTHDAY, 1929, 1931, AND 1933 CLASSES



* Includes a small proportion of skilled workers.

Source: Appendix table 19.

WPA 3882

At all age levels by far the greatest proportion of boys were employed in either clerical or semiskilled occupations. It is interesting to note, however, that from ages 15 to 17, the proportion of boys in miscellaneous clerical occupations declined somewhat, whereas the proportion in semiskilled occupations rose. The earliest labor-market entrants were more likely to get jobs such as office boys, messengers, and errand boys. Later on, boys had a wider variety of occupations open to them, and relatively more obtained semiskilled jobs as factory operatives, truck drivers, etc.

The proportion of boys working as unskilled laborers was about the same at all ages, fluctuating from 12 to 16 percent. The unskilled group did not include the same youth at all ages, however, but rather absorbed many new workers and also lost workers to other occupations. As shown later, more boys worked as unskilled laborers on their first jobs than on their latest jobs.³

In the case of girls the occupational pattern at different ages was affected not only by the entrance of better educated girls into the labor market, and the shifting about among occupational groups, but also by the withdrawal of older girls to become housewives.

The proportion of girls engaged in professional work increased steadily with greater age. The main reasons for this increase were the late entrance of college-trained girls into professional work and the relatively low rate of withdrawal of these girls to become housewives.

At each age level the great majority of girls worked in one of three groups of occupations, the clerical, semiskilled, or unskilled (servants and domestic workers). In general, clerical occupations assumed greater importance as girls grew older, and semiskilled and unskilled occupations less. When girls entered the labor market at an early age, they were limited for the most part to jobs for which little education was required. When high-school and college girls entered the labor market, however, they were able to qualify for a wider range of clerical jobs. The unskilled and semiskilled occupations also declined in importance because many girls left these fields for better jobs or to become homemakers.

FIRST AND LATEST JOBS

Youth's changing status in the labor market is pointed up vividly when their situation at the time they got their first jobs is compared with their situation at the time they were visited by the interviewers for this study. Some had by then dropped out of the labor market and some were unemployed, but most were at work.

³ See table 61, p. 92.

Changes in Labor-Market Status

Before considering the subject of principal interest—the changes in occupation, industry, and earnings from first to latest job—the differences in youth's employment status at the time of interview may first be noted. Their activities at that time showed interesting differences according to their length of time out of the eighth grade.

Table 57.—Activities on July 1, 1938, of Youth Who Earlier Had Full-Time Jobs, by Eighth-Grade Graduating Class

Activity on July 1, 1938	Eighth-grade graduating class			
	Total	1929	1931	1933
	<i>Percent distribution</i>			
Total ¹	100	100	100	100
Employed full time	65	65	66	62
Same job as first full-time job.....	20	15	19	28
Different job.....	45	50	47	34
Employed part time	5	5	5	6
Unemployed	13	9	12	18
Out of labor market	17	21	17	14
In school.....	3	3	3	3
Housewife.....	10	14	10	6
Other.....	4	4	4	6

¹ Includes all youth who had at least one full-time job at some time between leaving school and July 1, 1938.

Nearly two-thirds of the youth who had had full-time jobs earlier also were employed full time at the time the study was made. Although the proportion employed on July 1, 1938, was about the same for each of the three classes, more graduates of the earlier classes had changed jobs than had graduates of the later classes. A higher proportion of the earlier graduates also had withdrawn from the labor market to become housewives, and a lower proportion were unemployed, than was the case among the later graduates. In other words, the older youth were, and the longer out of grade school, the more likely they were to have changed jobs or (in the case of the girls) to have become housewives, and the less likely they were to have become unemployed.

Changes in Occupational Class

A comparison of occupational classes gives a good idea of the degree to which youth advanced from the time of their first full-time jobs to the jobs they held on July 1, 1938. However, it must not be forgotten that some youth suffered setbacks and some left the labor market. The following two tables, therefore, show not only the occupational classes of youth employed full time on July 1, 1938, but also the activities they followed if they were not employed at that date.

Table 58.—Activities or Occupational Classes on July 1, 1938, of Boys, by Occupational Class of First Full-Time Job

Activity or occupational class, July 1, 1938	Occupational class of first full-time job													
	Total	Professional	Proprietary, manage- rial, and official	Clerical						Skilled	Semiskilled	Unskilled		
				Total	Accounting and semiprofessional	Stenography and allied	Other clerical	Sales	Total			Servant and do- mestic	Laborer	
	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	
Total	73	73	82	78	86	89	77	79	77	71	65	68	63	
Employed full time	1	53	1	1	2	1	1	1	1	*	1	*	1	
Professional	3	1	54	3	1	—	2	4	2	2	2	3	2	
Proprietary, managerial, and official	29	9	15	54	78	83	55	50	9	13	13	13	12	
Clerical	2	—	1	5	62	6	2	2	1	1	1	1	1	
Accounting and semi- professional	1	1	1	2	—	51	*	*	*	*	—	—	—	
Stenography and allied	16	5	3	29	11	20	47	12	3	8	8	7	7	
Other clerical	10	3	10	18	5	6	5	36	5	4	4	5	4	
Sales	5	3	2	2	1	1	2	3	51	4	3	3	3	
Skilled	26	5	8	14	4	4	13	16	10	45	21	16	23	
Semiskilled	9	2	2	4	—	—	4	5	4	7	25	33	22	
Unskilled	3	1	*	*	—	—	2	2	1	2	9	27	2	
Servant and domestic Laborer	6	1	2	2	—	—	2	3	3	5	16	6	20	
Employed part time †	5	10	5	4	2	—	4	4	4	6	7	6	8	
Unemployed	15	11	9	12	7	7	12	11	14	17	20	17	21	
Not in labor market	7	6	4	6	5	4	7	6	5	6	8	9	8	
In school	4	4	2	4	3	2	5	4	1	3	5	5	5	
Other	3	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	4	3	3	4	3	

* Less than 0.5 percent.

† Less than 30 hours per week.

Despite the many changes that occurred between youth's entrance to the labor market and the time of interview, the largest proportion of youth remained employed in the same occupational class at which they had started to work. This tendency is particularly evident among boys and girls who started at relatively high levels in the broad fields of white-collar and manual work. For example, 50 percent or more of the youth who started in the following occupational classes were still working in them at the time of interview: among young men, professional, proprietary, semiprofessional, stenographic, and skilled work; and among young women, professional and stenographic work. The tendency to remain in these occupational classes apparently was strong because many of these youth were well enough trained to obtain their first employment in relatively well-paid jobs. In addition, they were less likely to become unemployed or to leave the labor market by the time the youth survey was made.

When youth did shift from their original occupations, there was a tendency to shift to related employment. For example, boys who started out as proprietors were more likely than most boys to work

Table 59.—Activities or Occupational Classes on July 1, 1938, of Girls, by Occupational Class of First Full-Time Job

Activity or occupational class, July 1, 1938	Occupational class of first full-time job												
	Total	Professional	Proprietory, manage- rial, and official	Clerical					Skilled	Semiskilled	Unskilled		
				Total	Accounting and semiprofessional	Stenography and allied	Other clerical	Sales			Total	Servant and do- mestic	Laborer
	Percent distribution												
Total	100	100	†	100	100	100	100	100	†	100	100	100	†
Employed full time	56	61	†	62	67	72	64	50	†	53	43	43	†
Professional.....	2	51	†	1	*	*	1	1	†	*	1	1	†
Proprietory, managerial, and official.....	*	—	†	*	*	*	*	*	†	*	*	*	†
Clerical	34	7	†	56	61	69	58	41	†	8	9	9	†
Accounting and semi- professional.....	4	2	†	7	44	3	3	3	†	1	1	1	†
Stenography and allied.....	12	1	†	21	7	58	8	4	†	1	2	2	†
Other clerical.....	12	2	†	19	7	7	45	8	†	2	2	3	†
Sales.....	6	2	†	9	3	1	2	26	†	*	3	3	†
Skilled	*	*	†	—	*	*	*	*	†	*	*	*	†
Semiskilled.....	14	2	†	4	4	2	4	6	†	42	11	11	†
Unskilled.....	6	1	†	1	2	1	1	2	†	3	22	22	†
Servant and domestic.....	6	1	†	1	2	1	1	2	†	3	22	22	†
Laborer.....	*	*	†	—	—	—	—	—	†	—	*	*	†
Employed part time ¹	5	5	†	4	3	2	4	7	†	5	8	8	†
Unemployed.....	10	5	†	9	7	9	10	9	†	11	14	14	†
Not in labor market	29	29	†	25	23	17	22	34	†	31	35	35	†
Housewife.....	21	7	†	17	17	12	15	25	†	24	27	27	†
In school.....	2	7	†	2	1	1	2	2	†	1	2	2	†
Other.....	6	15	†	6	5	4	5	7	†	6	6	6	†

*Less than 0.5 percent.

† Percent not computed for fewer than 50 cases.

¹ Less than 30 hours per week.

later as salesmen; when a small business or shop turned out to be unsuccessful, the closely related field of selling offered a logical second choice of vocation. Another revealing type of change was from stenographic work to semiprofessional or other clerical work. Again, there is a close connection among these three fields and relatively good opportunities for boys to work into higher paid jobs related to those they held.

In the manual occupations there were many changes from unskilled to semiskilled work and from semiskilled to unskilled. The dividing line between jobs in these two occupational classes can seldom be clearly drawn, and it is relatively easy for youth to advance to semiskilled work or to slip back to unskilled. Fortunately, more youth changed from unskilled to semiskilled jobs than from semiskilled to unskilled jobs.

Among both boys and girls professional persons and manual workers of all degrees of skill entered clerical work in relatively slight proportions. Professional workers have little incentive to make such a change; their efforts are bent rather to advancing in

their own fields. Manual workers for the most part either have comparatively little education fitting them for clerical work or else have specialized skills that tend to channel their activities in the hand or machine trades.

The story would be only half told if consideration were not given to the activities of youth who were not at work in full-time jobs on July 1, 1938.

About 1 boy and girl in 20 had shifted to a part-time job (less than 30 hours per week) by the time of interview. The proportion of part-time workers differed considerably according to occupational class, however. It was highest in the case of young men who had started in professional work—many of whom were still in such work at the time of interview. Irregular work, much of it on a part-time basis, is fairly common among such professional workers as musicians.

The proportion of youth who were unemployed at the time of interview varied considerably according to sex and the occupational classes in which youth had obtained their first full-time jobs. Since more girls than boys had withdrawn from the labor market by July 1938, a smaller proportion of girls was unemployed at that time. This is due to the fact that the group considered here included all youth who had previously held one full-time job or more; when the comparison is limited to youth who were currently in the labor market, the rate of unemployment was almost the same for boys and girls.⁴

When the percentages of unemployed workers are listed by occupational class, it appears that youth who started in white-collar occupations had an advantage over youth who started in manual occupations. Within the manual field, unemployment was less severe among the more skilled workers.

Table 60.—Percent of Youth Unemployed, July 1, 1938, by Occupational Class of First Full-Time Job

Occupational class of first full-time job	Percent unemployed July 1, 1938	
	Male	Female
Professional.....	11	5
Proprietary, managerial, and official.....	9	†
Clerical.....	12	9
Skilled.....	14	†
Semiskilled.....	17	11
Unskilled.....	20	14

† Percent not computed for fewer than 50 cases.

Withdrawal from the labor market was about four times more common among girls than among boys. The chief reason for leaving the labor market was, of course, to take up homemaking (21 percent of the girls who had had full-time jobs had done so). The proportion of

⁴ See table 65, p. 98

girls who became housewives was highest among domestic servants, semiskilled workers, and sales girls; it was lowest in the case of professional workers and stenographers. Presumably a lower marriage rate, a higher average age at marriage, and a greater tendency to continue working after marriage all have some bearing on the lesser tendency of professional and clerical workers to take up homemaking as a full-time activity.

In most occupational classes, as was noted, the majority of youth remained in the field they originally entered, but in some the majority shifted to different types of work. The question then arises as to whether these realignments resulted in a larger proportion of youth obtaining jobs in the more responsible and better paid occupations. The question may best be answered by comparing the occupational classes in which they worked in their first and latest full-time jobs. In such a comparison, however, it is necessary to guard against an underrepresentation of the occupational classes in which unemployment hits hardest at any given time. In table 61, therefore, "latest" jobs include both current jobs and the last jobs of youth unemployed at the time the study was made.⁵

The general picture is one of improved social-economic status. The greatest change was a decrease in the proportion of domestic servants and laborers—from 19 to 14 percent among boys, and from 22 to 13 percent among girls. Many youth had no alternative but to take unskilled jobs when they first sought work; as they gained experience, however, some found opportunities to shift to better jobs.

A somewhat higher proportion of youth were employed in semi-skilled and skilled occupations on their latest than on their first full-time jobs. These occupations were largely recruited from those who had started in other types of work which were less attractive or less well paid. Skilled workers were obtained to some extent from among apprentices who had been trained on semiskilled jobs.

Within the clerical field there were decreases in the proportion of youth working as salespersons. It is probable that the greatest

⁵ Owing to the different concepts and bases of comparison used, the findings of this table differ in certain respects from those of the birthday activity charts (figs. 11 and 12). The results do not appear inconsistent, however, when it is recalled that the birthday activity charts show the proportion of youth employed in the different occupational classes at each age level, whereas table 61 shows the proportion of youth employed in the different occupational classes at two stages of their careers—when they obtained their first full-time jobs, and when they last worked in full-time jobs at or near the time of interview. In table 61, both first and last jobs could be held at any age within the youth period, and first jobs could be held at any time between the date of eighth-grade graduation and the date of interview, July 1, 1938. The birthday activity charts are useful primarily in showing changing occupational attachments as youth grow older; the table on first and latest jobs in showing how youth's occupations following a period of labor-market participation differed from their occupations when they first obtained full-time jobs.

Table 61.—Occupational Classes of Youth's First and Latest Full-Time Jobs, by Sex

Occupational class of full-time job	Male		Female	
	First job ¹	Latest job ¹	First job	Latest job ¹
	<i>Percent distribution</i>			
Total	100	100	100	100
Professional.....	2	2	3	4
Proprietary, managerial, and official.....	3	4	•	1
Clerical.....	37	37	53	58
Accounting and semiprofessional.....	2	3	5	7
Stenography and allied.....	1	1	16	20
Other clerical.....	18	20	16	20
Sales.....	16	13	16	11
Skilled.....	3	6	•	•
Semiskilled.....	36	37	22	24
Unskilled.....	19	14	22	13
Servant and domestic.....	5	4	22	13
Laborer.....	14	10	•	•

*Less than 0.5 percent.

¹ Includes current jobs of employed youth and last jobs of youth unemployed on July 1, 1938.

decreases occurred in the lowest paid jobs in selling—as, for example, among house-to-house canvassers, soda clerks, and 5-and-10-cent-store salesgirls. In the case of boys, clerical jobs other than selling increased as much as selling jobs decreased, so that there was no net change for the clerical group as a whole. In the case of girls, the nonselling jobs increased more than the selling jobs decreased, so that the clerical group as a whole increased in relative importance.

To sum up: As would be expected from the fact that many youth remained in the same occupational field up to the time of interview, the distribution of jobs among the various occupational classes changed only moderately from the time youth obtained their first full-time jobs. The net result of such shifting as did occur, however, was in the direction of more skilled and difficult work. (As shown later, there was also a substantial increase in average earnings.) This optimistic conclusion is qualified, however, by the fact that many of the youth who remained in the labor market were unemployed at the time the latest information on their activities was obtained. Even in the face of a general advance in occupational level, unemployment remained the major problem of an important part of the youth group.

Changes in Industrial Group

As in the case of occupations, clear indications of changing industrial attachments of youth may be obtained by comparing their first and latest full-time jobs. It may thus be inferred what groups of industries offered the best employment opportunities for youth who had progressed beyond the initial stages of job seeking.

Most of the full-time jobs youth held, both at the beginning and at the end of the period surveyed, were in the fields of manufacturing,

Table 62.—Industrial Groups of Youth's First and Latest Full-Time Jobs, by Sex

Industrial group of full-time job	Male		Female	
	First job	Latest job ¹	First job	Latest job ¹
	<i>Percent distribution</i>			
Total	100	100	100	100
Agriculture	3	1	•	•
Other extractive ²	1	1	•	•
Manufacturing and mechanical	36	42	23	27
Transportation and communication	10	9	3	5
Trade	38	35	36	36
Public service	1	2	1	2
Professional service	5	4	10	11
Domestic and personal service	6	6	27	19

*Less than 0.5 percent.

¹ Includes current jobs of employed youth and last jobs of youth unemployed on July 1, 1938.

² Includes forestry, fishing, and extraction of minerals.

trade, and (in the case of the girls) domestic and personal service. The order of importance of these industrial groups changed in several respects, however.

As boys gained experience and were able to qualify for better jobs, the proportion that were engaged in the manufacturing and mechanical industries rose from 36 percent to 42 percent. At the same time the proportion working in trade fell from 38 percent to 35 percent. As a result, trade yielded to manufacturing as the largest source of employment for boys. Probably the most important reason why boys were attracted to the manufacturing and mechanical industries was that relatively higher wages could be earned in these industries than in most of the others open to untrained workers.⁶

The same proportion of young women were employed in trade on both first and latest jobs—36 percent. The greatest changes in the industrial attachments of girls occurred in the case of manufacturing and domestic and personal service. Manufacturing moved up from third to second place, and domestic and personal service fell from second to a poor third place. The sharp decline (from 27 to 19 percent) in the proportion of girls employed in domestic and personal service was principally due to the smaller proportion working as servants in private homes.⁷ The low wages, long hours, and lack of freedom in this type of work explain why many girls abandoned it at an early date.

Changes in Earnings

It has been noted that as youth grew older and gained experience, many were able to advance to more skilled and responsible positions. As a consequence, a definite improvement in earning power from youth's first to latest jobs would be expected.

⁶ See table 22, p. 41.

⁷ See appendix table 12.

Differences According to Sex

In comparing earnings on first and latest jobs, youth who were not employed at the time of interview must be taken into account, for their omission would exaggerate the degree of improvement. In table 63, therefore, "latest" jobs include not only the current full-time jobs of employed youth, but also the last full-time jobs of youth not employed full time on July 1, 1938.

Table 63.—Weekly Earnings on Youth's First and Latest Full-Time Jobs, by Sex

Weekly earnings on full-time jobs	Male		Female	
	First job	Latest job ¹	First job	Latest job ¹
	<i>Percent distribution</i>			
	100	100	100	100
Total				
Less than \$4.50.....	1	•	3	2
\$4.50-\$9.49.....	12	4	20	13
\$9.50-\$14.49.....	27	15	41	34
\$14.50-\$19.49.....	33	30	28	37
\$19.50-\$24.49.....	18	24	5	10
\$24.50-\$29.49.....	7	14	2	2
\$29.50-\$34.49.....	3	7	•	1
\$34.50-\$39.49.....	1	3	•	•
\$39.50 or more.....	1	3	•	•
Average	\$15.40	\$19.60	\$12.70	\$14.50

*Less than 0.5 percent.

¹ Includes current jobs of employed youth, and last jobs of youth unemployed, employed part time, or not in the labor market on July 1, 1938.

Although some youth earned less on their latest job than on their first, the majority definitely advanced in earning power. Whereas about one-eighth of the boys earned \$25 or more per week on their first full-time jobs, more than one-quarter earned this much on their latest full-time jobs. Drawing the line at \$20 or more per week for girls, 7 percent earned at least this much on their first jobs, and over 13 percent on their latest jobs.

The young men made more rapid progress in earning power than the young women. Their earnings on latest jobs averaged 27 percent higher than their earnings on first jobs, whereas the corresponding increase for the young women was 14 percent. This difference was chiefly due to the greater opportunities young men had for advancing to responsible positions.

As a result of the more rapid advancement of the boys, the sex differential in earnings grew wider. Average earnings of boys exceeded those of girls by 21 percent on first jobs and by 35 percent on latest jobs. Poorer chances for advancement are another aspect of the less favorable position of women in the labor market.

Differences According to Eighth-Grade Graduating Class

The longer youth were in the labor market, the greater was their progress towards higher earnings. With more work experience and a better knowledge of how to locate job openings, many young workers were able to change to jobs paying higher wages.⁸ Though youth of the earliest eighth-grade class (1929) had the greatest improvement in earnings, even youth of the latest class (1933) enjoyed higher average earnings on their latest than on their first full-time jobs.

Table 64.—Weekly Earnings on Youth's First and Latest Full-Time Jobs, by Eighth-Grade Graduating Class

Weekly earnings on full-time jobs	1929 class		1931 class		1933 class	
	First job	Latest job ¹	First job	Latest job ¹	First job	Latest job ¹
	<i>Percent distribution</i>					
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100
Less than \$4.50.....	2	1	2	1	3	2
\$4.50-\$9.49.....	14	6	16	8	18	12
\$9.50-\$14.49.....	33	18	33	22	36	33
\$14.50-\$19.49.....	30	30	31	35	29	35
\$19.50-\$24.49.....	12	21	10	18	8	11
\$24.50-\$29.49.....	5	12	4	8	4	5
\$29.50-\$34.49.....	2	6	2	4	1	2
\$34.50-\$39.49.....	1	3	1	2	1	1
\$39.50 or more.....	1	3	1	2	*	1
Average	\$14.70	\$18.50	\$14.30	\$16.70	\$13.40	\$14.80

*Less than 0.5 percent.

¹ Includes current jobs of employed youth, and last jobs of youth unemployed, employed part time, or not in the labor market on July 1, 1938.

The degree by which earnings improved may be seen most easily by comparing average weekly wages on first and latest full-time jobs. Average earnings rose 26 percent for graduates of the 1929 class, 17 percent for the 1931 class, and 10 percent for the 1933 class.

Though more youth of the 1929 class had had time in which to attend college, their advantage in earnings was probably not due to their better educations alone. Youth with more education had, on the average, less labor-market experience and, therefore, less opportunity to change jobs. Furthermore, the most usual amount of education possessed by young workers was high-school graduation, and all youth in the study could have gone that far in school. It seems, then, that a combination of education and experience was the main factor enabling youth to better their economic position.

⁸ Undoubtedly many youth also received higher wages as a result of promotions on the job. However, no information is available about these cases, as only one wage (the one received longest) was reported for each job.

Chapter VI

ACTIVITIES IN JULY 1938

BY MEANS of the dynamic method of analysis used in this study it has been possible to observe the major stages of youth's transition from student to productive worker or homemaker. Youth were followed, step by step, from school into the labor market, to their first jobs, through subsequent jobs and periods of unemployment, and (in the case of the girls) into homemaking. Comparisons were made of youth's reasons for leaving school and how they learned of jobs. Finally, by comparing their occupations and earnings at different stages of their careers it was possible to trace the progress made by young persons of different social-economic backgrounds.

The point has now been reached of taking stock of youth's position at the time they were visited by the interviewers for this study. This chapter represents the last step in the process of analyzing youth's activities at different points in time. From information concerning their current employment status or non-labor-market activities, their jobs, and their earnings, the economic situation in which the young people found themselves at the time of interview may be visualized.

LABOR-MARKET AND EMPLOYMENT STATUS

At the time when the youth study was conducted (July 1938), business conditions had slumped again after the 1937 upturn. Thus in spite of the fact that many of the youth in the study had had a chance to get established in jobs, unemployment stood at a high level. This unemployment, moreover, was not evenly distributed, but was much worse in some parts of the youth population than in others. It is important, therefore, to examine not only the general rate of unemployment but also the differences according to youth's social and economic backgrounds.

Sex Differences

Though most of the labor-market entrants were still in the labor market at the time of interview, some had dropped out. Likewise, among youth still in the labor market on July 1, 1938, there were considerable differences in employment status. Table 65 shows the differences in labor-market participation and employment status for boys and girls.

Table 65.—Activities and Employment Status of Youth on July 1, 1938, by Sex

Activity on July 1, 1938	Total	Male	Female
<i>Percent distribution</i>			
Total.....	100	100	100
In labor market.....	82	93	70
Not in labor market.....	18	7	30
In school.....	3	4	2
Housewife.....	11	—	21
Other ¹	4	3	7
In labor market.....	100	100	100
Employed full time ²	72	74	70
Employed part time ³	9	7	10
Unemployed.....	19	19	20
Work programs ⁴	3	4	3
Seeking work ⁵	16	15	17

¹ Includes unpaid family work, illness, and other activities not representing labor-market participation.

² 30 hours or more per week.

³ Less than 30 hours per week.

⁴ Includes CCC, NYA, WPA, and State and local work relief.

⁵ Includes actively seeking work, layoff, and on strike.

The greatest difference between the sexes in respect to their activities on July 1, 1938, was in the proportion still in the labor market. More than nine-tenths of the boys but only seven-tenths of the girls who had entered the labor market earlier were still in the labor market. The difference was due almost wholly to the fact that many girls had dropped out of the labor market to become housewives. Many more girls would of course take up homemaking in preference to paid employment as they grew older.

When youth who were still in the labor market on July 1, 1938, are considered as a separate group, the differences between the sexes in employment status, though small, are in favor of the boys. Girls were slightly more likely to be unemployed, and somewhat more likely to be employed part time. As a result, 74 percent of the boys but only 70 percent of the girls were employed full time.

If the sex differences in unemployment are of slight importance, the general level of unemployment is of the utmost importance. Nearly one-fifth (19 percent) of the youth currently in the labor force were without private jobs. Some of these unemployed youth had never had jobs, some had had no jobs for a considerable period of time, and some had only recently lost their jobs; however, the very fact

that they constituted so high a proportion of the labor-market youth at the time of interview is enough to cause serious concern. The improvement that most youth made in their position in the labor market was to a considerable extent offset by the unemployment of a significant minority of them. Both factors should be taken into account in trying to arrive at a true evaluation of the economic position of young people during the depression.

Differences According to Eighth-Grade Graduating Class

The relative importance of youth's different activities at the time of interview varies according to their age, time out of school, and amount of labor-market experience. Some idea of the variation due to all of these factors may be gained by comparing the activities on July 1, 1938, of youth who graduated from the eighth grade in 1929, 1931, and 1933.

Table 66.—Activities and Employment Status of Youth on July 1, 1938, by Eighth-Grade Graduating Class

Activity on July 1, 1938	Eighth-grade graduating class		
	1929	1931	1933
	<i>Percent distribution</i>		
Total	100	100	100
In labor market	78	81	85
Not in labor market	22	19	15
In school.....	3	3	3
Housewife.....	15	11	6
Other.....	4	5	6
In labor market	100	100	100
Employed full time.....	80	77	62
Employed part time.....	7	7	12
Unemployed.....	13	16	26
Work programs.....	3	3	4
Seeking work.....	10	13	22

The differences among the three classes in the proportions of youth leaving the labor market are smaller than the differences in the proportions of workers unemployed. The greater proportion of drop-outs from the labor market in the earlier classes reflects the fact that more girls of these classes had become housewives.

Among youth in the labor market in July 1938 members of the latest graduating class (1933) showed up to the poorest advantage. The percentage unemployed in this class was 26, as compared with 16 for the 1931 class and 13 for the 1929 class. Likewise, a higher proportion of the 1933 class than of the 1929 and 1931 classes was employed part time. The large number of unemployed and part-time-employed youth in the 1933 class was due chiefly to their comparatively recent entrance into the labor market, their greater

youthfulness, and their generally lower level of education (since few of them could have had college training by the time of this study).

Differences According to Time in Labor Market, Age, and Education

So important are the factors of labor-market experience, age, and education in determining prospects for employment that they deserve to be considered in more detail. Table 67 shows the percentage of young workers unemployed on July 1, 1938, according to their length of time in the labor market.

Table 67.—Percent of Youth Unemployed, July 1, 1938, by Time in the Labor Market

Time in the labor market	Percent un- employed, July 1, 1938	Time in the labor market	Percent un- employed, July 1, 1938
Less than 3 months.....	41	2 years but less than 3.....	18
3-5 months.....	31	3 years but less than 4.....	16
6-11 months.....	27	4 years but less than 5.....	16
1 year but less than 2.....	21	5-9 years.....	15

Clearly, the risk of unemployment is greatest among boys and girls with the least experience in the labor market. It may fairly be said with regard to the risk of unemployment that the first year is the hardest. After as much as 3 years' experience in the labor market youth's chances of escaping unemployment improve only slightly, if at all.

Unemployment at any given time is also worst among the youngest members of the labor force. Not only are most such youth handicapped by less education and less work experience, but their age alone counts against them. Many employers prefer to hire more mature workers; indeed they are often compelled to do so by law.

Table 68.—Percent of Youth Unemployed, July 1, 1938, by Age

Age on July 1, 1938	Percent un- employed, July 1, 1938	Age on July 1, 1938	Percent un- employed, July 1, 1938
17 years and under.....	31	22 years.....	16
18 years.....	27	23 years.....	14
19 years.....	26	24 years.....	17
20 years.....	19	25 years and over.....	18
21 years.....	16		

In general, the older youth were at the time of interview, the less likely they were to be unemployed. As an extreme comparison, youth aged 23 were less than half as likely to be unemployed as those aged 17 or under.

However, the relationship is obscured somewhat by the fact that youth aged 18 or under at the time of interview were advanced

students, and those aged 24 or over were retarded students.¹ Among those aged 17 or under educational advancement fell so far short of offsetting inexperience and immaturity that these persons were subject to an extremely high risk of unemployment. On the other hand, among youth aged 24 and over, educational retardation so far offset greater maturity that they, too, were subject to considerable risk of unemployment.

The incidence of unemployment is also related closely to amount of education. However, because the proportion of youth who are unemployed at any time is so greatly affected by the amount of their labor-market experience, a comparison of education and unemployment is best made only for those who have had equal "exposure" to the labor market. By selecting youth with different amounts of education from each of the three classes it is possible to compare groups

Table 69.—Percent of Youth Unemployed, July 1, 1938, by Years in the Labor Market, Education, and Sex

Years in labor market ¹ and highest grade completed	Percent unemployed, July 1, 1938	
	Male	Female
5 years in labor market:		
Completed high school (1929 class)	11	9
2 years of high school (1931 class)	18	15
Completed grade school (1933 class)	27	23
4 years in labor market:		
1 year of college (1929 class)	12	11
3 years of high school (1931 class)	19	17
1 year of high school (1933 class)	26	27
3 years in labor market:		
2 years of college (1929 class)	9	12
Completed high school (1931 class)	15	13
2 years of high school (1933 class)	26	28
2 years in labor market:		
3 years of college (1929 class)	21	22
1 year of college (1931 class)	14	16
3 years of high school (1933 class)	26	34
1 year in labor market:		
Completed college (1929 class)	16	18
2 years of college (1931 class)	10	22
Completed high school (1933 class)	21	31

¹ "Years in the labor market" in this table are only approximate figures inferred from the year in which the youth graduated from the eighth grade and the amount of schooling they subsequently had.

having equal labor-market exposure. For example, youth of the 1929 class who completed 12 grades of school, youth of the 1931 class who completed 10 grades, and youth of the 1933 class who completed only 8 grades all had been in the labor market about 5 years (from 1933 to 1938) when the study was made. Following a similar procedure throughout, the effect of education upon unemployment may

¹ These statements are based upon the fact that the average or normal age at graduation from the eighth grade is 14. No youth in this study could be 18 or under at the time of interview unless he had graduated from the eighth grade at 13 or under; none could be 24 or over unless he had graduated from the eighth grade at 15 or over.

be compared for groups of youth who had been in the labor market about the same length of time.

The general conclusion is that youth with better educations were less subject to unemployment. In most of the groups the differentials are not only consistent but strikingly sharp. However, among boys in the labor market approximately 1 year, and among both boys and girls in the labor market approximately 2 years, the differentials are not completely consistent. Though youth in these groups who had the least education also had the highest rate of unemployment, as would be expected, those with intermediate amounts of education (13 or 14 grades) had less unemployment than those with the most education (15 or 16 grades). With the exception of those who had attended college and had only recently entered the labor market, youth with better educations had a decided advantage over youth with poorer educations in securing employment.

Differences According to Race and Section of City

Before leaving the subject of youth's employment status at the time the study was made, differentials in unemployment will be examined according to race and the background factor of section of city in which the youth resided when he graduated from the eighth grade. In table 70 these factors are considered in combination.

Table 70.—Percent of Youth Unemployed, July 1, 1938, by Race and Section of City

Race and section of city (rental areas)	Percent distribution—both sexes	Percent unemployed July 1, 1938		
		Both sexes	Male	Female
All races ¹	100	19	19	20
Low rental areas.....	26	22	23	27
Medium rental areas.....	51	19	18	19
High rental areas.....	23	16	14	18
White.....	100	18	17	18
Low rental areas.....	23	20	21	19
Medium rental areas.....	52	18	17	18
High rental areas.....	25	16	14	18
Negro.....	100	40	38	42
Low rental areas.....	52	40	39	40
Medium rental areas.....	42	40	37	43
High rental areas.....	6	39	34	43

¹ Includes some youth of oriental and other races not listed separately because of small numbers involved.

This table gives further evidence of the affects of social-economic background on youth's success in the labor market. Because of low family income and social pressure, Negro children grow up in the poorer sections of the city; this is shown by the fact that only 6 percent of Negro youth, as compared with 25 percent of white youth, lived in high rental areas at the time they graduated from the eighth

grade. The economic and social handicaps under which Negro youth grew up are in turn reflected in their disadvantaged position in the labor market 5 to 9 years later. At the time this study was made, more than twice as high a proportion of Negro youth as of white were unemployed (40 and 18 percent, respectively). In terms of human suffering and wasted manpower a rate of unemployment of 18 percent is serious enough, but one of 40 percent is calamitous. Negro youth constitute one of the truly disadvantaged groups in our society.

The rate of unemployment among Negro youth was about the same regardless of the section of the city from which they came. Among white youth, however, unemployment was lower for those who came from the higher rental areas. Given the initial advantage of having been born white, young people who in addition had stimulating environments and better educations were in a more favorable position to get and keep jobs in later years.

OCCUPATIONAL CLASSES

Holding almost any kind of job is better than being unemployed, but it is important also from the worker's point of view that he have a job which is satisfying and which yields a decent living. It is desirable, therefore, to note the proportion of employed youth falling into the different occupational groups, and the social-economic differentials determining which youth get jobs in the various groups.

Occupational Classes According to Sex and Employment Status

In table 71 the general picture of youth's occupations at or near the time of the survey is given. Three types of jobs are shown separately:

Table 71.—Occupational Classes of Jobs on July 1, 1938, and of Last Jobs, by Sex

Occupational class	Full-time jobs on July 1, 1938			Part-time jobs on July 1, 1938			Last full-time jobs of youth unemployed on July 1, 1938		
	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female
	<i>Percent distribution</i>								
Total.....	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
Professional.....	3	2	4	10	11	9	2	1	2
Proprietary, managerial, and official.....	3	5	1	1	1	1	1	2	•
Clerical.....	48	39	60	33	22	45	32	24	45
Accounting and semi-professional.....	5	3	8	4	1	8	2	1	4
Stenography and allied.....	10	1	21	5	•	9	6	1	13
Other clerical.....	21	21	20	6	4	8	14	13	15
Sales.....	12	14	11	18	17	20	10	9	13
Skilled.....	4	6	•	4	8	—	4	7	•
Semiskilled.....	30	36	24	29	37	22	35	41	25
Unskilled.....	12	12	11	23	21	23	26	25	27
Servant and domestic.....	7	4	11	15	6	23	14	5	27
Laborer.....	5	8	•	8	15	—	12	20	•

• Less than 0.5 percent.

full-time and part-time jobs of youth employed on July 1, 1938, and last full-time jobs of youth unemployed on that date.

The largest group represented in this table was made up of boys and girls who were working in full-time jobs at the time of enumeration; this group numbered 15,219, as compared with 834 youth employed part time (15-29 hours), and 3,022 youth currently unemployed who had earlier had full-time jobs.

Among youth employed full time on July 1, 1938, the largest number were engaged in clerical or semiskilled work. Nearly half (48 percent) of these youth had clerical jobs, and nearly one-third (31 percent) had semiskilled jobs. Clerical jobs were a more important source of employment for girls than for boys, however, and semiskilled jobs were more important for boys than for girls. The majority of youth thus were engaged in work that was of medium difficulty and responsibility.

The remaining full-time occupational classes may for convenience be classified into two groups: a top group, consisting of professional persons, proprietors, managers, and officials, and skilled workers; and a bottom group, consisting of unskilled workers. Although about the same proportion of boys as of girls worked in the unskilled occupations, more than twice as high a proportion of boys as of girls worked in the more responsible and skilled jobs. Thus relatively few youth of either sex held jobs either at the top or at the bottom of the occupational scale, but such differences as existed were in favor of the boys. Moreover, the relative advantage of boys might be expected to increase as more of them left college, professional school, vocational school, or apprenticeships.

The occupational distribution of youth employed part time differed in several important respects from that of youth employed full time. Youth holding part-time jobs were more largely represented in sales, unskilled, and professional work than were youth holding full-time jobs. The very nature of selling, laboring, and servant jobs is such that many workers are hired on a temporary or part-time basis.

The large proportion of part-time workers in professional jobs is partly accounted for by the fact that some youth who had only recently started their own practices did not have enough clients to require as much as 30 hours per week of their time. In addition, many professional persons, such as musicians and nurses on call, work less than 30 hours per week.

From information concerning the last full-time jobs of youth who were unemployed on July 1, 1938, it is possible to infer in what occupational classes unemployment was most prevalent. About one-quarter (26 percent) of the youth currently unemployed had last worked in unskilled occupations, as compared with one-ninth (11 percent) of the youth currently employed full time. It may there-



onal Youth Administration.

Office Worker.

fore be inferred that unemployment struck particularly hard among unskilled workers. Such unemployment must have worked a double hardship, for wages were almost universally lower in laboring and servant work than in other types of work.

In view of what was said earlier about the higher weekly wages boys could earn in skilled than in clerical work, it is of interest to see at this point what the risk of unemployment was in these two occupations. Clerical workers were less well represented among unemployed than among employed boys; skilled workers, however, were represented in about the same proportion in each group. It appears, therefore, that clerical workers had somewhat better assurance of steady employment than skilled workers. Higher weekly earnings in skilled work thus were offset to some extent by more unemployment. Whether there was a net financial gain in preparing for skilled work depends upon how high earnings were over the course of a year.

Occupational Classes According to Race

Earlier it was noted that Negro youth had a much higher rate of unemployment than white youth. A comparison of the occupational classes of white and Negro youth who were employed full time on July 1, 1938, shows that the Negroes were, in this respect also, in a very unfavorable position as compared with white youth.

Table 72.—Occupational Classes of Full-Time Jobs, July 1, 1938, by Sex and Race

Occupational class of full-time job on July 1, 1938	Male		Female	
	White	Negro	White	Negro
	<i>Percent distribution</i>			
Total	100	100	100	100
Professional.....	2	1	4	2
Proprietary, managerial, and official.....	5	1	1	—
Clerical.....	40	10	62	6
Accounting and semiprofessional.....	3	*	8	1
Stenography and allied.....	1	—	22	1
Other clerical.....	22	5	21	1
Sales.....	14	5	11	3
Skilled.....	7	2	"	—
Semiskilled.....	36	30	24	17
Unskilled.....	10	56	9	75
Servant and domestic.....	3	31	8	75
Laborer.....	7	25	*	—

* Less than 0.5 percent.

The key to the occupational status of Negro youth is found in the proportion engaged in unskilled work. Among white youth only 10 percent of the boys and 8 percent of the girls held unskilled jobs, but among Negro youth the percentages were 56 and 75, respectively.

Virtually the only other jobs in which Negroes were well represented were in semiskilled occupations; 30 percent of the boys and 17 percent

of the girls held such jobs. When unskilled and semiskilled jobs are taken together, 86 percent of the Negro boys and 92 percent of the Negro girls are accounted for.

Negro youth are a small minority in this study, numbering only 1,460 among the labor-market entrants (as compared with 23,868 white youth) and only 497 among youth employed full time when the survey was made (as compared with 14,506 white youth). Nevertheless the fact that they were so largely confined to menial and less skilled types of jobs, when they were able to get work at all, means that they represent a social problem out of all magnitude to their number. Improved educational opportunity, a more liberal hiring policy on the part of employers, and a rise in general business activity would all conduce toward raising the economic level of Negro youth.

Occupational Classes According to Education

Not all youth are able to find jobs at as high a level as they might qualify for on the basis of educational attainments. Nevertheless, most young people who obtain jobs involving skill and responsibility must satisfy a relatively high prerequisite of education, and those who have poorer educations tend to gravitate into the less skilled types of work. Experience on the job may help a youth to get ahead, but the range of jobs for which he may qualify is dependent in considerable part upon the amount of education he has acquired.

Table 73.—Occupational Classes of Full-Time Jobs, July 1, 1938, by Education and Sex

Occupational class of full-time jobs on July 1, 1938	Years of schooling completed									
	Male					Female				
	8	9-11	12	13-15	16 and over	8	9-11	12	13-15	16 and over
	Percent distribution									
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
Professional	•	1	2	4	23	•	1	4	10	36
Proprietary, managerial, and official	4	4	4	9	10	•	1	•	1	2
Clerical	25	28	48	58	50	21	40	75	77	54
Accounting	1	1	4	8	12	3	5	9	11	10
Stenography and allied	•	•	2	1	1	4	7	29	35	19
Other clerical	14	14	28	30	16	7	15	26	22	20
Sales	10	13	14	19	21	7	13	•	11	9
Skilled	10	8	5	4	3	•	•	•	—	—
Semiskilled	49	44	30	17	8	64	41	13	6	3
Unskilled	12	15	11	8	6	15	17	8	6	5
Servant and domestic	4	5	4	2	3	15	17	8	6	5
Laborer	8	10	7	6	3	—	•	•	—	—

*Less than 0.5 percent.

The more education youth had, the more likely they were to get jobs in the "white-collar" fields: i. e., as professional persons; proprietors, managers, and officials; or clerical workers. The less

education they had, the more likely they were to get jobs in the manual fields: i. e., as skilled, semiskilled, or unskilled workers. This generalization holds good for both young men and young women.

The clearest illustration of the need for more education in white-collar work than in other fields is afforded by professional persons. Only 1 percent of the youth who left school before completing high school were professional persons, but 23 percent of the young men and 36 percent of the young women who had graduated from college were working in this field at the time of interview.

The proportion of youth working in the clerical field rose sharply among those with more education and reached a maximum among those who had attended but not completed college. Because of the large proportion of college graduates in professional work, the proportion in clerical work was somewhat less than among youth who had left college before receiving their degrees. In the case of the girls, high-school graduates were represented in clerical work in almost the same proportion as girls who had entered but not completed college.

The large field of semiskilled work illustrates exceptionally well how youth with less education are drawn into manual jobs. The proportion of boys in semiskilled work dropped steadily from 49 percent among grade-school graduates to 8 percent among college graduates; in the case of girls the proportion dropped even more sharply—from 64 to 3 percent.

It is somewhat surprising that the proportion of boys holding skilled jobs also dropped steadily from 10 percent among grade-school graduates to 5 percent among high-school graduates. In view of the fact that skilled mechanics averaged higher earnings than male clerical workers, one would expect to find that a higher proportion of boys with high-school educations had prepared themselves for skilled manual jobs. Expanding opportunities in the national defense industries will almost certainly draw many better educated young men into skilled occupations.

Occupational Classes According to Age at Eighth-Grade Graduation

One of the most important factors affecting youth's subsequent position in the labor market is their advancement or retardation in school. Using age at eighth-grade graduation² as a rough measure of educational advancement or retardation, striking differences appear in the occupational distribution of youth employed full time in July 1938.

Each occupational division had either a steadily increasing or a steadily decreasing proportion of youth from the successive groupings of age at eighth-grade graduation. Professional and clerical workers

² The most usual age at eighth-grade graduation of youth currently employed was 14; 35 percent graduated at the age of 13 or under, and 25 percent graduated at the age of 15 or over.

Table 74.—Occupational Classes on July 1, 1938, by Age of Youth at Eighth-Grade Graduation

Occupational class of full-time job on July 1, 1938	Age at eighth-grade graduation				
	12 years and under	13 years	14 years	15 years	16 years and over
	<i>Percent distribution</i>				
Total.....	100	100	100	100	100
Professional.....	6	4	3	2	1
Proprietary, managerial, and official.....	2	3	3	4	4
Clerical.....	65	61	47	32	24
Skilled.....	2	2	4	6	7
Semiskilled.....	18	22	32	41	44
Unskilled.....	7	8	11	15	20

were drawn more heavily from the more advanced students, whereas manual workers of all levels of skill, and proprietors, managers, and officials were drawn more heavily from the more retarded students.

The proportion of proprietors, managers, and officials rose only slightly with greater age at eighth-grade graduation, but in all the other groups the differences were remarkably clear-cut.

What is behind this definite association between youth's early educational advancement or retardation and their subsequent occupational level? Of first importance is the fact that the youngest and intellectually ablest youth are most likely to finish high school or go on to college (provided economic opportunity for doing so is equal), and are also most likely to be selected by employers for hiring and promotion on the job.

It must not be assumed, however, that native intelligence is the only factor involved. In the first place, achievement in school depends not only upon the intellectual capacity a youth is born with, but also upon the degree of stimulation he receives from his home environment. In the second place, it is probable that some youth from the lower social-economic levels were retarded at eighth-grade graduation because of illnesses or physical defects which their parents could not afford to have corrected, or because the youth worked after school and consequently gave less time to their studies.³ Such young people were less likely to go on to further study and better jobs.

It must also be recognized that youth differ in their interests. For example, boys with mechanical interests and aptitudes probably are less likely than other youth to push themselves in school and are more likely to leave school early to seek mechanical work.

³ See appendix tables 20 and 21 for evidence as to the relationship of father's occupation and section of city on youth's advancement or retardation.

INDUSTRIAL GROUP

As in the case of occupations, the principal topics of interest in connection with the industries in which youth worked are where opportunities for full-time employment were best, where part-time work was most prevalent, and where unemployment struck hardest. Information on these points is contained in table 75.

Table 75.—Industrial Groups of Jobs on July 1, 1938, and of Last Jobs, by Sex

Industrial group	Full-time jobs on July 1, 1938			Part-time jobs on July 1, 1938			Last full-time jobs of youth unemployed on July 1, 1938		
	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female
	<i>Percent distribution</i>								
Total.....	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
Agriculture.....	1	1	•	1	2	•	2	3	•
Other extractive ¹	•	1	•	•	•	—	1	2	•
Manufacturing and mechanical.....	35	40	28	28	37	19	40	50	25
Transportation and communication.....	7	9	5	5	9	1	7	10	2
Trade.....	37	37	36	29	25	33	28	25	33
Public service.....	2	2	2	•	1	•	1	1	1
Professional service.....	7	4	11	20	20	19	5	3	8
Domestic and personal service.....	11	6	17	16	6	28	16	6	31

*Less than 0.5 percent.

¹ Includes forestry, fishing, and extraction of minerals.

The two industrial groups in which most youth obtained full-time jobs were trade and manufacturing. Though about the same proportions of boys and girls were engaged in trade, a higher proportion of boys than of girls were engaged in manufacturing. On the other hand, a higher proportion of girls than of boys worked in professional service or in domestic and personal service.

The industrial groups that were major sources of employment for full-time workers were also major sources of employment for part-time workers. Thus the risk of underemployment (or opportunities for part-time employment in the case of youth who wanted or could accept only such types of jobs) did not differ greatly according to broad industrial group. Perhaps the most important difference was that relatively more part-time than full-time workers were engaged in professional service and in domestic and personal service.

By noting the industrial groups in which unemployed youth had last worked, and comparing them with the industrial groups in which employed youth were working, it appears that unemployment struck hardest among boys in the manufacturing and mechanical industries, and among girls in domestic and personal service. Seasonal and

cyclical variations in business activity affect construction and many branches of manufacturing severely, and labor turnover is typically high in domestic and personal service. Most factory workers have the protection of unemployment compensation to tide them over periods of unemployment, but domestic servants do not. Girls in domestic service are thus one of the most disadvantaged groups in the labor market, for their wages are low, their risk of unemployment is high, and they are excluded from the protection of unemployment insurance.

EARNINGS AT TIME OF INTERVIEW

It is natural that success in one's job is usually measured in terms of dollars and cents. Other criteria of success are also important—for example, interest in one's work and satisfaction in a job well done. Nevertheless, money earnings are probably the most fundamental measure of success associated with workers' jobs—the economic status they are thereby able to attain.

Three different measures of earnings are available in this study: hourly, weekly, and annual. The first indicates what the approximate "price of labor" is. The second takes account of the varying number of hours worked per week and is the most usual measure of what workers earn when they are employed. The third takes account of both employment and unemployment during the course of a year and therefore is the best measure of the income workers have on which to live. All three measures of youth's earnings are considered in the following discussion.

Earnings According to Sex

By the time of this study, some youth had been in the labor market as much as 9 years, and some had only recently entered the labor market. Likewise, their educational qualifications ranged from eighth-grade graduation to postgraduate college training. Nevertheless, with all these differences in experience and formal education, the earnings of youth were fairly well concentrated at certain levels. There was not such extreme variation in earnings as is found in the case of older workers.

Hourly Earnings

The hourly earnings of boys and girls are considered first. It should be noted, however, that the figures in table 76 are not actual wage rates, but were obtained by dividing weekly wages by the number of hours worked.

The average hourly earnings of all youth employed full time were 41 cents. However, boys averaged about one-fourth more in hourly earnings than girls (45 and 36 cents, respectively). The higher earning

Table 76.—Hourly Earnings of Youth on Full-Time Jobs, July 1, 1938, by Sex

Hourly earnings on full-time jobs on July 1, 1938	Total	Male	Female
	Percent distribution		
Total.....	100	100	100
Less than \$0.10.....	1	•	1
\$0.10-\$0.19.....	6	4	8
\$0.20-\$0.29.....	14	12	18
\$0.30-\$0.39.....	26	20	34
\$0.40-\$0.49.....	28	22	25
\$0.50-\$0.59.....	14	18	10
\$0.60-\$0.69.....	8	12	2
\$0.70-\$0.79.....	4	6	1
\$0.80-\$0.89.....	2	3	•
\$0.90-\$0.99.....	1	1	•
\$1.00 or more.....	1	2	•
Average.....	\$0.41	\$0.45	\$0.36

*Less than 0.5 percent.

power of boys is shown also by the fact that 64 percent of the boys, but only 38 percent of the girls, earned 40 cents or more per hour. The earnings of boys were also more variable than those of girls, particularly in the upper wage brackets. Whereas at least some boys had advanced to considerably higher hourly earnings than the majority of their fellows, girls seems to have faced a more definite upper limit in earnings.

Weekly Earnings

A better idea of the earning power of youth may be gained by examining their weekly earnings. As shown in table 77, average weekly full-time earnings of boys were \$20.00, and of girls \$15.30.

Table 77.—Weekly Earnings of Youth on Full-Time Jobs, July 1, 1938, by Sex

Weekly earnings on full-time jobs on July 1, 1938	Total	Male	Female
	Percent distribution		
Total.....	100	100	100
Less than \$4.50.....	1	•	1
\$4.50-\$9.49.....	5	3	8
\$9.50-\$14.49.....	20	13	31
\$14.50-\$19.49.....	35	29	43
\$19.50-\$24.49.....	20	25	13
\$24.50-\$29.49.....	10	16	3
\$29.50-\$34.49.....	5	8	1
\$34.50-\$39.49.....	2	3	•
\$39.50 or more.....	2	3	•
Average.....	\$17.70	\$20.00	\$15.30

*Less than 0.5 percent.

The average weekly earnings of boys were 31 percent higher than those of girls. The sex differential is greater in weekly than in hourly earnings because boys work more hours per week on the average than girls.

Only a small proportion of youth had advanced to the point of earning \$30 or more per week. Among boys 8 percent earned \$30-\$34, 3 percent earned \$35-\$39, and 3 percent earned \$40 or more. The situation among the girls was less favorable, for only 1 percent earned \$30-\$34, and less than 1 percent earned \$35 or more. At the other end of the income scale were 16 percent of the boys and 40 percent of the girls who earned less than \$15 per week.

Annual Earnings

The economic status of youth cannot be fully understood unless their weekly earnings are translated into annual earnings, in order to take account of the effect of unemployment and part-time employment in reducing income. Hourly, daily, or weekly earnings may be high, and yet the income youth have available to live on throughout the year may be lowered considerably if their work is intermittent.

From knowledge of youth's average weekly earnings, it can be estimated what their annual earnings would be if they remained employed throughout the year at the same weekly rate. In this study, however, the actual earnings in private employment of youth who were in the labor market throughout the year July 1, 1937-July 1, 1938, were computed directly, taking into account not only changes in wage level but also periods of unemployment.

The most favorable record of earnings was of course made by youth who had jobs throughout the year. Average earnings of youth employed for 15 hours or more per week in private industry throughout the year were \$1,054 for boys and \$789 for girls. When youth with some unemployment are considered along with those who were steadily employed, average earnings are much lower. Average annual earnings in private employment for all youth (those with steady employment and those with some unemployment)⁴ were \$907 for boys and \$701 for girls.

The average annual earnings of boys were 29 percent higher than those of girls. The sex differential in annual earnings was thus nearly the same as in weekly earnings.

The figures on average earnings do not tell the whole story of youth's incomes. For instance, it should be noted that one-quarter of the boys and two-fifths of the girls earned less than \$600 during the year. Likewise, only 13 percent of the boys and 1 percent of the girls earned \$1,400 or more.

In appraising the significance of youth's annual earnings it must be remembered that some youth were partly supported by their families.

⁴ Youth with some unemployment constituted about one-third (35 percent) of all youth in this tabulation. Since earnings on jobs of less than 15 hours per week were not ascertained, youth with any such jobs were excluded from the analysis.

Table 78.—Annual Private Earnings of Youth, July 1, 1937–July 1, 1938, by Sex

Annual private earnings of youth in the labor market from July 1, 1937, to July 1, 1938	Total	Male	Female
	Percent distribution		
Total ¹	100	100	100
Less than \$200.....	13	10	17
\$200-\$399.....	7	6	9
\$400-\$599.....	11	9	13
\$600-\$799.....	20	16	27
\$800-\$999.....	20	19	22
\$1,000-\$1,199.....	14	17	9
\$1,200-\$1,399.....	7	10	2
\$1,400-\$1,599.....	4	7	1
\$1,600-\$1,999.....	3	4	•
\$2,000 or more.....	1	2	•
Average.....	\$791	\$907	\$701

*Less than 0.5 percent.

¹ Includes youth employed throughout the year and youth with some unemployment during the year, but does not include youth with any employment of less than 15 hours per week during the year.

On the other hand, it must be remembered that in many families it was necessary for the youth to contribute to the general support.

Earnings According to Eighth-Grade Graduating Class

All three measures of earnings—hourly, weekly, and annual—show that youth of the earlier classes had advanced to a higher economic level than youth of the later classes.

Table 79.—Average Hourly, Weekly, and Annual Earnings of Youth, by Eighth-Grade Graduating Class

Private earnings	1929 class	1931 class	1933 class
Average hourly earnings on full-time jobs on July 1, 1938.....	\$0.46	\$0.41	\$0.35
Average weekly earnings on full-time jobs on July 1, 1938.....	19.00	17.80	15.30
Average annual earnings, July 1, 1937, to July 1, 1938 ¹	948.00	831.00	568.00

¹ Includes youth employed throughout the year and youth with some unemployment during the year, but does not include youth with any employment of less than 15 hours per week during the year.

The average hourly and weekly earnings of the 1929 class were about one-eighth higher than those of the 1931 class, and average annual earnings were about one-seventh higher. Likewise average hourly and weekly earnings of the 1931 class were about one-sixth higher than those of the 1933 class. Average annual earnings of the 1931 class, however, were 46 percent higher than those of the 1933 class—a significant indication that unemployment during the year was exceptionally high among members of the latest eighth-grade graduating class.

Differences in earnings of youth from the three classes are a reflection of differences in age, education, labor-market experience, and the proportion of girls remaining in the labor market. It may be inferred that the average youth is almost certain to gain increased

earning power with the passage of time. The level of earnings an individual will reach or the adequacy of his earnings to cover increased financial responsibilities, cannot, of course, be determined.

Earnings According to City

Because of differences in location, types of industries, composition of the labor force, and other factors, the seven cities in this study showed wide differences in the earnings of their youth. According to all three measures of earnings—hourly, weekly, and annual—youth in San Francisco were paid the highest wages and youth in Birmingham the lowest. Youth in Seattle were next to the top in earning power, and youth in Duluth next to the bottom. Table 80 shows the average level of earnings of youth in each of the seven cities.

Table 80.—Average Hourly, Weekly, and Annual Earnings of Youth by City

City	Average hourly earnings on full-time jobs on July 1, 1938	Average weekly earnings on full-time jobs on July 1, 1938	Average annual earnings July 1, 1937-July 1, 1938 ¹
San Francisco.....	\$0.49	\$20.20	\$949
Seattle.....	.45	19.60	847
Binghamton.....	.41	17.40	785
Denver.....	.36	16.80	782
St. Louis.....	.37	16.10	749
Duluth.....	.35	15.60	716
Birmingham.....	.32	15.30	657

¹ Includes youth employed throughout the year and youth with some unemployment during the year, but does not include youth with any employment of less than 15 hours per week during the year.

The margin by which wages in San Francisco exceeded those in Birmingham was 53 percent in hourly earnings, 32 percent in weekly earnings, and 44 percent in annual earnings. The difference was least in the case of weekly earnings because high hourly wages were accompanied by a relatively short work week in San Francisco, whereas low hourly wages were accompanied by a relatively long work week in Birmingham. Likewise, the difference was greater in annual than in weekly earnings because unemployment during the course of the year was less severe in San Francisco than in Birmingham.

Money earnings are less important than what those earnings will buy. Unfortunately, little information is available as to the cost of living at a particular time in different cities, so that real wages in the seven survey cities cannot be compared as effectively as might be desired. Nevertheless, an approximate comparison is afforded by use of cost-of-living figures collected by the FERA in March 1935 in 59 cities.⁵ Although the comparison can be made for only 6 of the 7

⁵ Stecker, Margaret Loomis, *Intercity Differences in Costs of Living in March 1935, 59 Cities*, Division of Social Research, Works Progress Administration, Washington, D. C., 1937, pp. 158-159.

cities (Duluth being omitted), and although the standard "maintenance" budget in the FERA-WPA cost-of-living study was based on March 1935 prices and applies to a four-person manual worker's family, it is nevertheless felt that such a comparison may indicate at least approximately the relative level of youth's real annual earnings in the different cities.

Table 81 shows roughly how youth in the six cities for which data were available compared in average real annual earnings. Real earnings in San Francisco, in which actual earnings were highest, are taken as the base and equated to 100.⁶

Table 81.—Indexes of Real Annual Earnings of Youth, by City

City	Index of average annual earnings	City	Index of average annual earnings
San Francisco.....	100	Denver.....	92
Seattle.....	101	St. Louis.....	82
Binghamton.....	93	Birmingham.....	82

Though these indexes must be viewed with caution, for the reasons mentioned above, they do indicate certain general tendencies very clearly. The six cities for which data were available have the same rank in real as in actual earnings. Moreover, they fall into three groups of relative real annual earnings: at the top, Seattle and San Francisco; intermediate, Binghamton and Denver; and at the bottom, St. Louis and Birmingham. Higher wage scales had not raised the cost of living in the Pacific coast cities to the point where gains in money wages were wiped out. And a low cost of living in Birmingham did not make up for the lower incomes of its young workers.

Social-Economic Differences in Earnings

Youth's personal characteristics and their status in the labor market also had a great deal to do with their earning power. In discussing these factors, it is convenient to take as the measure of earning power the average weekly earnings of youth currently employed on full-time jobs. Since the social-economic differences in economic status were discussed rather fully in earlier sections of this report, they will be dealt with only briefly here.

Age and Earnings

The older youth were at the time of interview, the higher were their weekly earnings. This is shown clearly in table 82.

⁶ See appendix table 22 for the data used in calculating these indexes.

Table 82.—Weekly Earnings of Youth on July 1, 1938, by Age

Age	Average weekly earnings on full-time jobs on July 1, 1938	Age	Average weekly earnings on full-time jobs on July 1, 1938
18 years and under.....	\$14.70	22 years.....	\$18.80
19 years.....	15.20	23 years.....	20.00
20 years.....	16.70	24 years.....	20.20
21 years.....	17.60	25 years and over.....	20.20

The steady rise in earnings with greater age is in part due to greater amounts of education or experience, and in part to the fact that, other things being equal, older youth are put in more responsible and better paid jobs than younger ones.

Even though youth aged 25 and over were somewhat retarded educationally, their weekly earnings averaged as high as those of youth aged 24, and somewhat higher than youth aged 23. Apparently, their greater age or labor-market experience at the time of interview was sufficient to offset their educational retardation. Had they not been retarded, their earnings would have been even higher.

Labor-Market Experience and Earnings

In general, average weekly earnings were higher among youth who had been in the labor market longest.

Table 83.—Weekly Earnings of Youth on July 1, 1938, by Time in the Labor Market

Time in the labor market	Average weekly earnings on full-time jobs on July 1, 1938	Time in the labor market	Average weekly earnings on full-time jobs on July 1, 1938
Less than 3 months.....	\$15.30	1 year but less than 2.....	\$15.70
3-5 months.....	14.80	2 years but less than 5.....	18.00
6-11 months.....	15.20	5-9 years.....	19.60

Earnings rose with increasing labor-market experience, the only exception being in the case of youth who had entered the labor market less than 3 months before the date of interview. Many of these recent entrants had obtained jobs almost immediately upon leaving school, so it is not surprising that the circumstances which facilitated their ready employment also contributed towards relatively high earnings. Nevertheless, for the bulk of the youth studied, higher earnings came only with longer experience in the labor market.

Education and Earnings

For each additional year of education youth obtain, they may reasonably expect a definite increase in their earning power later in

life. There is encouragement in the findings shown in table 84 for young people who are doubtful about the money value of an education.

Table 84.—Weekly Earnings of Youth on July 1, 1938, by Education

Years of education completed	Average weekly earnings on full-time jobs on July 1, 1938		Years of education completed	Average weekly earnings on full-time jobs on July 1, 1938	
	Male	Female		Male	Female
8.....	\$19.90	\$13.90	13.....	\$20.50	\$16.60
9.....	19.90	13.90	14.....	22.60	15.70
10.....	20.20	14.70	15.....	24.50	†
11.....	20.20	14.90	16 and over.....	26.30	18.70
12.....	19.70	15.80			

†Average not computed for fewer than 50 cases.

College graduates averaged about one-third more in weekly earnings than grade-school graduates. Furthermore, earnings rose steadily with increased amounts of education, except in the case of boys who completed only the twelfth grade and of girls who completed only the fourteenth grade.⁷

The principal explanation for the lower earnings of boys who had graduated from high school than of boys with 10 or 11 years of education is that there appears to be a distinct difference in the types of jobs these two groups obtain. Boys who graduated from high school were more likely to obtain clerical jobs than boys who completed only the tenth or eleventh grade. And earnings of boys in clerical work were lower than in skilled or even semiskilled work.

The preceding table actually understates the extent to which increased education contributed toward higher earnings. Youth with the greatest amounts of education were younger,⁸ on the average, and had less labor-market experience than youth with less education. These factors tend to draw wages down. With greater age and work experience, better educated youth are almost certain to increase their lead in earnings.

Race and Earnings

Since earnings differ so much from city to city, it is desirable to compare the earnings of white and Negro youth in the same city. Table 85 shows these differences for Birmingham and St. Louis—the two survey cities in which Negroes were numerous enough to study.

The disadvantaged position of Negro youth in each of these cities is evident. However, their relative disadvantage was greater in

⁷ The relatively low average earnings of girls with 14 years of education is probably not significant because of the small number of cases on which the median is based.

⁸ Students who graduated from the eighth grade at an earlier age than the average were more likely than retarded students to go to college.

Table 85.—Weekly Earnings of Youth on July 1, 1938, by Race, Birmingham and St. Louis

City and race	Average weekly earnings on full-time jobs	City and race	Average weekly earnings on full-time jobs
Birmingham:		St. Louis:	
White.....	\$17.20	White.....	\$16.20
Negro.....	8.50	Negro.....	11.70

Birmingham, where they earned only half as much as white youth, than in St. Louis, where they earned about seven-tenths as much as white youth. A high rate of unemployment, jobs in menial occupations when they could get work, and finally lower earnings in those jobs—these were the typical lot of Negro youth in the survey.

Occupational Class and Earnings

Within certain limits imposed by such factors as opportunity to pursue an education, their own aptitudes, and personal characteristics like sex and race, youth have freedom of choice in selecting an occupation. They may be assisted to an intelligent choice by a well-planned program of vocational guidance. In any such program, information on relative earnings in the different occupations is one factor that should carry a good deal of weight. Table 86 presents such information in general terms.

Table 86.—Weekly Earnings of Youth on July 1, 1938, by Occupational Class and Sex

Occupational class of full-time job on July 1, 1938	Average weekly earnings		
	Total	Male	Female
Total.....	\$17.70	\$20.00	\$15.30
Professional.....	18.70	25.60	14.60
Proprietary, managerial, and official.....	26.50	27.30	†
Clerical.....	17.10	19.20	16.00
Accounting and semiprofessional.....	16.70	20.20	15.30
Stenography and allied.....	17.00	19.60	16.90
Other clerical.....	17.30	18.50	16.30
Sales.....	17.10	19.70	14.20
Skilled.....	23.60	23.90	†
Semiskilled.....	18.30	20.30	14.80
Unskilled.....	16.00	19.70	11.90
Servant and domestic.....	13.70	17.60	11.90
Laborer.....	20.20	20.20	†

†Average not computed for fewer than 50 cases.

Young men working as proprietors of their own businesses or as managers or officials in other business firms had the highest average weekly earnings—\$27.30. Young professional men were not far behind with average earnings for a full-time week of \$25.60. Thus, at a comparatively early stage of their working lives, these two groups

occupied a position, in respect to earnings, that they could in all probability expect to retain throughout their careers.

Perhaps the most important finding to be noted is that boys in skilled manual work averaged about one-quarter more in weekly earnings than boys in clerical work (\$23.90 and \$19.20 per week, respectively). Even semiskilled workers and unskilled laborers had earnings that were as high or higher than those of boys in clerical work. The highest paid clerical workers—accountants and semi-professional persons—averaged only about as much as semiskilled workers and unskilled laborers. Even boys who worked as domestic servants were little worse off in earning power (\$17.60 per week) than the lowest paid group of clerical workers—those in miscellaneous clerical jobs (\$18.50 per week).

Even though clerical work may have the advantage of greater regularity, earnings in this field are so much lower than those in skilled work that more boys who are doubtful about the choice of an occupation might well feel encouraged to choose skilled work. With the expansion of opportunities under the national defense program, skilled mechanics will be even more in demand than they were when this survey was made. The clerical field, on the other hand, is definitely a low-paid one for boys.

The rank of the different occupational groups according to earnings was far different in the case of girls. In their case jobs in the clerical field were the best paid, average weekly earnings being \$16. The highest paid clerical workers were stenographers and "other" clerical workers. Sales girls, however, averaged only \$14.20 per week—the only lower paid group being domestic servants, who averaged \$11.90 per week.

There is a widespread misconception that the clerical field is as badly overcrowded for girls as for boys. As the findings of this study show, clerical jobs (except those in selling) were the highest paid jobs available to young women. Even professional jobs paid lower wages on the average. Office work then must be regarded at the present time as one of the most promising fields of employment for girls.

DURATION OF EMPLOYMENT STATUS

Though a youth may be employed at a given time, it cannot be known for certain that he normally has steady employment, for he may have obtained a job only recently. Similarly, unemployment at a given time may be only a temporary interruption to an otherwise steady record of employment. In order to check and amplify the earlier statements made concerning youth's employment status, therefore, the duration of their current employment or unemployment will be examined.

Duration of Employment

The average length of time in the labor market of youth currently employed full time was 41 months; the average duration of their current full-time employment⁹ was 22 months. Since these figures, taken alone, do not give much information about the steadiness of youth's recent employment, it is necessary to supplement them with more detailed data.

Table 87.—Duration of Youth's Full-Time Employment, by Time in the Labor Market

Cumulative duration of full-time employment ¹	Time in the labor market								
	Total	Less than 3 months	3-5 months	6-11 months	1 year but less than 2	2 years but less than 3	3 years but less than 4	4 years but less than 5	5-9 years
	Percent distribution								
Total.....	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
Less than 3 months.....	9	100	30	19	10	7	6	6	5
2-5 months.....	9	—	70	18	11	9	7	5	5
6-11 months.....	12	—	—	63	21	10	8	8	5
1 year but less than 2.....	22	—	—	—	58	27	16	15	11
2 years but less than 3.....	16	—	—	—	—	47	23	15	11
3 years but less than 4.....	13	—	—	—	—	—	40	17	11
4 years but less than 5.....	8	—	—	—	—	—	—	34	12
5-9 years.....	11	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	40

¹ Total amount of continuous full-time employment up to and including July 1, 1938.

The longer youth were in the labor market, the greater was the duration of their current employment. In all cases the most usual duration of employment was the same, in terms of class intervals,¹⁰ as youth's time in the labor market. For example, 40 percent of the youth who were in the labor market 5 years or more were also employed steadily for at least 5 years preceding the date of interview. Their total employment during their time in the labor market would, in most cases, be greater than their current employment. It may therefore be concluded that most young workers who were employed at the time of interview enjoyed relatively stable employment for a period preceding that time.

Duration of Unemployment

In general, the duration of unemployment of youth unemployed at the time of interview was less than the duration of employment of youth currently employed. This result follows from the fact that the great majority of workers have more employment than unemployment

⁹ The duration of youth's current employment status was cumulative, i. e., the duration of employment included all jobs held prior to the date of enumeration, provided they were not separated by periods of unemployment or non-participation in the labor market.

¹⁰ The number of months employed might of course be less than the number of months in the labor market by the amount of each class interval.

during a given interval spent in the labor market. A distribution of the duration of youth's unemployment, according to the length of time they were in the labor market, shows this more clearly.

Table 88.—Duration of Unemployment of Youth, by Time in the Labor Market

Cumulative duration of unemployment on July 1, 1938	Time in the labor market								
	Total	Less than 3 months	3-5 months	6-11 months	1 year but less than 2	2 years but less than 3	3 years but less than 4	4 years but less than 5	5-9 years
	<i>Percent distribution</i>								
Total.....	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
Less than 3 months.....	31	100	28	31	23	29	24	26	24
3-5 months.....	19	—	72	18	17	20	19	21	21
6-11 months.....	28	—	—	51	31	26	30	31	28
1 year but less than 2.....	13	—	—	—	29	13	10	10	10
2 years but less than 3.....	4	—	—	—	—	12	6	5	6
3 years but less than 4.....	3	—	—	—	—	—	11	3	3
4 years but less than 5.....	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	4	3
5-9 years.....	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	5

Youth who had only recently entered the labor market could not, of course, have been unemployed for very long, so that long unemployment occurred only among those who had entered the labor market several years prior to 1938.

Among youth who had been in the labor market for a year or longer, a definite pattern of duration of unemployment emerges. As a rough approximation, about one-quarter of these youth had been unemployed for less than 3 months, one-half for 3-11 months, and one-quarter for 12 months or more.

If unemployment of a few months' duration is a discouraging episode in a young worker's career, unemployment of a year or more is a major disaster. Yet, among youth in the labor market 5 years or more, 10 percent had been unemployed 1 to 2 years, 12 percent 2 to 5 years, and 5 percent 5 years or longer. These seriously disadvantaged young workers exemplify the youth unemployment problem at its worst.¹¹

¹¹ For a fuller discussion of disadvantaged youth in this study, see Payne, Stanley L., *Disadvantaged Youth on the Labor Market*, Series I, No. 25, Division of Research, Work Projects Administration, Federal Works Agency, Washington, D. C., 1940.

Chapter VII

YOUTH'S REACTIONS TO THEIR EXPERIENCES

YOUTH'S OWN feelings about their experiences in the labor market throw additional light on how they fared in the transition from student to worker. Although it is difficult in a large-scale survey to get an adequate idea of how youth reacted to their experiences, some information may be gained by analyzing their replies to pertinent questions asked at the time of enumeration. The two questions of this type which were put to youth in the present study were as follows: (1) "What special difficulties have you encountered in securing jobs?" and (2) "What are your plans for the future?"

It is recognized that any analysis based on youth's answers to "attitude" questions such as these must necessarily be somewhat inexact. Nevertheless, in spite of the fact that the data are rough, it is believed that they indicate the situation generally, and that valuable inferences may be drawn as to how youth felt about their past difficulties and accomplishments in the labor market, and their ambitions for the immediate future.

SPECIAL DIFFICULTIES IN SECURING EMPLOYMENT

Many youth upon leaving school stepped into positions waiting for them in their fathers' businesses or offered them by employers in search of promising recruits. Other youth, almost as fortunate, had little difficulty in getting work by their own efforts shortly after they started job hunting. But with unemployment at an unprecedented level during the depression, large numbers of young people went through months, and in some cases years, of fruitless and discouraging search before they found jobs.

In a sense, all youth in this study who had difficulty in finding work faced a common problem. Most of them entered the labor market

after the depression started, and they soon found that the general demand for labor was at a low ebb. It was necessary to seek work of employers who, with a smaller number of jobs to fill, could pick and choose their workers more carefully. As a consequence, young workers who did not have the proper qualifications became keenly aware of their shortcomings.

In order to obtain definite information on the obstacles youth faced in getting work, they were asked in this study what special difficulties they had, over and above those common to all youth in a crowded labor market. Some of the replies given have considerable practical importance, as they show what measures need to be adopted to improve youth's prospects for employment. Even though the adoption of these measures may not raise the general level of employment among young workers, individuals can benefit if they avail themselves of the experience of others who have been "through the mill."

Special Difficulties According to Sex

About one-third (31 percent) of all youth who entered the labor market reported special difficulties in obtaining employment. The remainder said that they had encountered only such difficulties as were common to all young job seekers during the depression, or else had encountered no particular difficulties in obtaining jobs.

More young women than young men reported special difficulties in securing employment—35 percent as against 28 percent. This result was foreshadowed by the earlier finding that among the youngest workers girls were more subject to unemployment than boys. Apparently boys and girls faced problems of somewhat different nature or severity in getting jobs. A clearer idea of what these problems were may be gained by comparing the special difficulties reported by boys and girls, respectively.

Table 89.—Special Difficulties of Youth in Securing Employment, by Sex

Special difficulty in securing employment	Total	Male	Female
	Percent distribution		
Total	100	100	100
Lack of experience	16	12	21
Lack of general training	3	3	3
Lack of specialized training	3	3	3
Insufficient education	2	2	1
Too young	2	1	2
Lack of union membership	1	2	•
Physical defects	1	1	1
Lack of "pull"	1	1	1
Racial or religious discrimination	•	•	•
Other	2	3	3
No special difficulty	69	72	65

* Less than 0.5 percent.

The most interesting point to note is that so few of the girls reported discrimination in obtaining jobs that they had to be grouped with girls citing only miscellaneous difficulties. Apparently this difficulty is met chiefly by older women or women in particular types of work, such as professional service.

What then, is the principal reason for the greater difficulty of young women in getting jobs? It appears to be chiefly lack of experience. One-fifth of the girls cited this as their chief difficulty, as compared with one-eighth of the boys. One of the more important reasons for this difference would appear to be the greater tendency of boys than of girls to take part-time jobs while still in school, and thereby to get experience that stands them in good stead later on.

It must be realized, however, that during a period of widespread unemployment lack of experience may be only a relative and not an absolute shortcoming. With many workers applying for the few jobs available, hiring standards may be set arbitrarily high to simplify the process of selection. Raising the general level of experience can therefore have little if any effect upon increasing employment. The fact that the most important special difficulty of both boys and girls was inexperience, may simply reflect the tendency of many employers to stress this particular qualification when they selected the few workers they needed from a great number of applicants.

After lack of experience, youth were most concerned about shortcomings in their education as handicaps to obtaining jobs. Lack of general or specialized training, or simply insufficient education, were cited by 8 percent of the boys and 7 percent of the girls. Since the same proportion of youth reported insufficient general training as insufficient specialized training, it would appear that the schools need to make available both types of training. Expert vocational guidance in the schools is also necessary to direct youth into courses of study most closely related to the type of work they desire and are fitted to follow. In addition, youth must be enabled to remain in school despite economic pressure in their homes to force them out into the working world.

Only 1 percent of the boys and 2 percent of the girls reported that their chief special difficulty in securing employment was that they were too young. Some of these youth may have been kept from employment by child labor laws, and some may simply have appeared less suitable workers to employers who could secure all the help they needed among older youth. In any case, the future of these youth would be better safeguarded if they could be kept in school instead of forced into the labor market. Social legislation protecting the economic security of the youth and his family appears to be the most feasible way of preventing premature entrance into the labor market.

About 2 percent of the boys and fewer than 1 percent of the girls said that lack of union membership stood in the way of their getting jobs. The proportion was higher in San Francisco and Seattle, where labor unions are stronger than in the other survey cities. Many unions have restrictions on membership to prevent the number of job seekers from getting too far out of line with job opportunities. It may be remarked in passing that progressive union leaders are aware of the problems of youth seeking entry to the various trades and industries and are giving considerable thought to the ways in which opportunities may be opened up to newcomers without sacrificing the hard-won gains of older members.

Physical disabilities are, of course, very real obstacles to obtaining employment. Perhaps all that can be done to minimize the hardships of youth thus afflicted is to give them expert vocational guidance so that they can prepare for work in which their disabilities will handicap them least.

Undoubtedly "pull" sometimes determines which of several candidates for a job will be selected. However, a youth may feel that he lacks "pull" when he actually lacks the qualifications that employers seek. Only 1 percent of these boys and girls felt that they lost out in getting jobs because they did not know the right people.

Finally, fewer than 1 percent of these youth reported that racial or religious discrimination constituted a special difficulty when they sought work. This question will be discussed more fully later, when special difficulties are considered in relation to race.

Special Difficulties According to Eighth-Grade Graduating Class

Knowing that the earlier classes contained a larger proportion of youth with either long labor-market experience or more advanced

Table 90.—Special Difficulties of Youth in Securing Employment, by Eighth-Grade Graduating Class

Special difficulty in securing employment	Eighth-grade graduating class		
	1929	1931	1933
	<i>Percent distribution</i>		
Total	100	100	100
Lack of experience	13	17	18
Lack of general training	3	3	3
Lack of specialized training	3	3	3
Insufficient education	2	2	2
Too young	1	1	2
Lack of union membership	1	1	2
Physical defects	1	1	1
Lack of "pull"	1	1	1
Racial or religious discrimination	•	•	•
Other	3	2	3
No special difficulty	72	69	65

*Less than 0.5 percent.

educations, we should expect that their members would report (or remember) fewer special difficulties in obtaining employment. That this was actually the case is shown by the fact that 28 percent of the 1929 class, 31 percent of the 1931 class, and 35 percent of the 1933 class reported special difficulties.

Regardless of how recently youth had graduated from the eighth grade, their main difficulty in securing employment was lack of experience. This difficulty was more acute for members of the 1931 and 1933 classes than for members of the 1929 class. Members of the 1929 class were more likely to have been in the labor market a considerable length of time or to have entered the labor market with college training; in the first case they were likely to have acquired some experience by the time of the study, in the second case experience was less likely to be required of them as a condition of employment.

It is pertinent again to note that lack of experience is in many cases not so much an indictment of the qualifications of young workers as a statement of the fact that jobs were scarce during the depression. It is by now trite to quote youth's common complaint, "I can't get a job without experience, but how can I get experience without a job?" Nevertheless the point deserves to be made that lack of experience would be a much less serious handicap if ample job opportunities were available. The mere passage of time, as shown by the preceding table, helps ameliorate at one and the same time the problems of inexperience and joblessness, but the cost in wasted manpower is great. The most direct attack upon the youth problem obviously involves first and foremost the provision of more jobs.

Special Difficulties According to Race

Of the 25,684 youth who entered the labor market, 93 percent were white, 6 percent were Negro, and 1 percent were oriental. Most of the Negroes lived in Birmingham or St. Louis, and most of the orientals in San Francisco or Seattle. Since the minority racial groups represent special social-economic problems out of all proportion to their size, their special difficulties in obtaining employment are next compared with those of the predominant white group.

In view of the well-recognized disadvantages that Negroes have in the competition for jobs, it is most surprising to find that only 10 percent of them reported special difficulties, as compared with 33 percent of the whites and 35 percent of the orientals. Only 1 percent of the Negroes (as compared with 15 percent of the orientals) reported that their major special difficulty was racial discrimination.

These results, far from being an indication of a favorable position of Negro youth in the labor market, are in fact an indication of the opposite. For, in the first place, it must be recognized that Negro youth suffered considerably more unemployment than white youth.

Table 91.—Special Difficulties of Youth in Securing Employment, by Race

Special difficulty in securing employment	Race		
	White	Negro	Oriental
	<i>Percent distribution</i>		
Total	100	100	100
Lack of experience	17	5	8
Lack of general training	3	1	4
Lack of specialized training	3	1	2
Insufficient education	2	1	—
Too young	2	•	1
Lack of union membership	1	—	1
Physical defects	1	•	•
Lack of "pull"	1	—	1
Racial or religious discrimination	•	1	15
Other	3	1	3
No special difficulty	67	90	65

• Less than 0.5 percent.

Furthermore, when they got jobs, they were limited chiefly to unskilled laboring and domestic and personal service. Since experience and education are not likely to be major factors in getting unskilled jobs, few Negroes reported these difficulties in securing employment.

The small proportion of Negroes reporting special difficulties must be due largely to the fact that they compared their position with that of members of their own race rather than with that of youth as a whole. Only because they took for granted the great likelihood of unemployment or of employment restricted pretty largely to a few low-paid occupations, did they feel that they were subject to no particular racial discrimination in securing jobs.

The situation among Chinese and Japanese youth was quite different from that among Negro youth. Oriental youth had a wider variety of occupations open to them and were more likely to compare their situation with that of white youth. As a result, they were keenly aware of racial discrimination in getting jobs.

Special Difficulties According to Education

Within certain broad limits education and experience are interchangeable qualifications for employment. That is to say, a youth who has received good preparation in school for his line of work needs less in the way of experience when he applies for a job than a youth not so well educated. Likewise, a youth with less education may qualify for a job on the basis of thorough experience. From the findings of table 92, however, it appears that a good education (particularly through the college level) decidedly reduces the difficulties of young people in securing employment.

Only one-fifth of the college graduates, as compared with one-third of the high-school and grade-school graduates, reported special difficulties in obtaining jobs. The principal advantage of the college

Table 92.—Special Difficulties of Youth in Securing Employment, by Education

Special difficulty in securing employment	Years of education completed				
	8	9-11	12	13-15	16 and more
	<i>Percent distribution</i>				
Total	100	100	100	100	100
Lack of experience.....	14	13	19	14	10
Lack of general training.....	5	3	3	2	1
Lack of specialized training.....	3	2	3	3	2
Too young.....	3	1	1	1	1
Insufficient education.....	4	3	1	1	•
Lack of "pull".....	•	1	1	1	•
Physical defects.....	1	1	1	•	•
Lack of union membership.....	1	2	1	1	1
Racial or religious discrimination.....	—	•	•	•	1
Other.....	2	3	3	3	4
No special difficulty.....	67	71	67	74	80

*Less than 0.5 percent.

graduates was that they needed to depend less heavily upon experience to be selected for jobs.

There was one exception to the generalization that further education reduces youth's difficulties in getting jobs. Youth who graduated from high school were more likely to report special difficulties in securing jobs than youth who had attended but not completed high school. The principal special difficulty of the high-school graduates was lack of experience. Nearly one-fifth (19 percent) of the high-school graduates reported inexperience as a special difficulty—a higher proportion than for any other educational group, and nearly double the proportion for college graduates (10 percent).

The other group reporting a high proportion of special difficulties was the grade-school graduates. Their problem was not only inexperience but also inadequate education. A higher-than-average proportion of grade-school graduates reported a lack of general training, insufficient education, or that they were too young.

Special Difficulties According to Reason Left School

In earlier sections of this report some of the ways in which youth's educational backgrounds affect their subsequent activities in the labor market were pointed out. Another interesting aspect of this relationship is given by a comparison of youth's special difficulties in securing employment with their reasons for first leaving school.

Youth who left school for financial reasons or because of illness or physical disabilities were the ones who faced the most compelling kinds of handicaps in continuing their educations. These handicaps carried over into their labor-market experiences, for 35 percent of these youth (a higher proportion than in any other group leaving school) reported special difficulties in securing employment.

Table 93.—Special Difficulties of Youth in Securing Employment, by Reason Left School

Special difficulty in securing employment	Reason first left school						
	Finan- cial	Pre- ferred to work	No de- sire for further educa- tion	Dis- liked school	Illness or physical disa- bility	Mar- riage	Other
	<i>Percent distribution</i>						
Total.....	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
Lack of experience.....	18	12	15	13	15	10	14
Lack of general training.....	4	1	3	2	3	2	2
Lack of specialized training.....	4	2	2	3	2	3	3
Insufficient education.....	2	1	1	2	2	1	2
Too young.....	2	2	1	2	1	1	1
Lack of union membership.....	1	2	1	2	1	1	1
Physical defects.....	1	•	1	1	6	•	1
Lack of "pull".....	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Racial or religious discrimination.....	•	•	•	•	•	—	1
Other.....	2	3	2	4	4	3	3
No special difficulty.....	65	76	73	70	65	78	71

*Less than 0.5 percent.

Those leaving school because they could not afford to continue were not only especially handicapped by lack of experience when they sought work but also were handicapped somewhat more than other youth by lack of general or specialized training. Adequate student aid and work programs can be of material aid in assisting youth to continue their education and gain work experience.

As for those youth who left school because of illness or physical disabilities, 6 percent reported that physical defects also constituted major barriers to securing employment. It is encouraging to note that such a small proportion were thus handicapped in securing employment. Nevertheless young people who were physically handicapped both in school and in the labor market clearly need special guidance and training to enable them to make a living.

The proportion of youth reporting special difficulties was lowest among those who first left school because of marriage or because they preferred to work. Of the youth who left school to get married, most were girls. Some of these girls were under considerable economic pressure to enter or reenter the labor market, but others wanted jobs because they wished to raise their standard of living or disliked being homemakers on a full-time basis. Since many girls in the latter groups had considerable "waiting power" in seeking work, they were less likely to report special difficulties in obtaining employment.

In regard to youth who left school because they preferred to work, it may be assumed that this preference was in many cases the result of definite job opportunities of which they knew. This factor would reduce the proportion of youth reporting special difficulties in securing employment.

Special Difficulties According to Father's Occupation

The probability that a youth will encounter special difficulties in securing employment is to some extent affected by his early environmental advantages or disadvantages. This tendency is brought out in table 94, in which the usual occupation of the youth's father is used as a rough measure of his social-economic background.

Table 94.—Special Difficulties of Youth in Securing Employment, by Usual Occupational Class of Father

Special difficulty in securing employment	Usual occupational class of father					
	Profes- sional	Propri- etary	Clerical	Skilled	Semi- skilled	Un- skilled
	<i>Percent distribution</i>					
Total.....	100	100	100	100	100	100
Lack of experience.....	13	14	17	17	18	15
Lack of general training.....	3	3	3	3	3	4
Lack of specialized training.....	4	2	3	3	3	3
Insufficient education.....	1	1	1	2	2	2
Too young.....	2	1	1	1	2	1
Lack of union membership.....	1	1	1	1	1	2
Physical defects.....	1	•	1	1	1	1
Lack of "pull".....	•	1	1	1	1	1
Racial or religious discrimination.....	•	•	•	•	•	1
Other.....	2	3	2	3	3	3
No special difficulty.....	73	74	70	68	66	67

*Less than 0.5 percent.

The proportion of youth reporting special difficulties in securing employment was lowest for the children of professional persons, proprietors, managers, and officials; it was highest for the children of manual workers. The advantages that parents can give their children in the way of furthering their education, delaying their entrance to the labor market, and assisting them in finding jobs all contribute toward easing youth's difficulties in finding employment.

Lack of experience was the principal difficulty faced by youth of all social-economic levels, and most of the differences in the proportions of those reporting difficulties were accounted for by this factor. Since youth from families higher in the social-economic scale enjoy generally superior educations, lack of experience is a less serious handicap to them than to those less well educated.

Special Difficulties According to Employment Status on July 1, 1938

As shown earlier, youth who are unemployed at a given date are much more likely to have had a considerable amount of past unemployment than those employed at that date. It would be expected then that currently unemployed youth would report relatively more special difficulties in obtaining work than those currently employed.

About one-half (53 percent) of the youth currently unemployed, as compared with about one-quarter (27 percent) of those currently employed, reported special difficulties in obtaining jobs. Part of this difference may be due to the fact that youth who were employed when interviewed were apt to have forgotten their earlier difficulties, whereas those who were unemployed were still keenly aware of theirs. A more important explanation, however, is that the unemployed included a considerable proportion of youth who had handicaps, such as lack of education, that put them at a continuing disadvantage in the competition for jobs.

Table 95.—Special Difficulties of Youth in Securing Employment, by Employment Status on July 1, 1938

Special difficulty in securing employment	Employment status on July 1, 1938	
	Employed	Unemployed
	Percent distribution	
Total	100	100
Lack of experience	13	27
Lack of general training	2	6
Lack of specialized training	3	5
Insufficient education	2	2
Too young	2	2
Lack of union membership	1	4
Physical defects	1	2
Lack of "pull"	1	1
Racial or religious discrimination	.	.
Other	2	4
No special difficulty	73	47

*Less than 0.5 percent.

Lack of experience was the principal difficulty faced by both groups, but it was more frequently reported by unemployed youth (27 percent) than by employed youth (13 percent). Inasmuch as many of the unemployed were recent entrants to the labor force, it is evident that inexperience would be their greatest difficulty. The unemployed also found themselves handicapped by lack of general or specialized training to a greater extent than did the employed.

It should finally be noted that lack of union membership was mentioned as a special difficulty by 4 percent of the unemployed youth but only 1 percent of the employed. Relatively more of the youth who were currently unemployed were candidates for jobs requiring union membership than was true among youth who were currently employed. This follows from the fact that manual workers, among whom union membership is most common, were subject to the greatest risk of unemployment.

PLANS FOR THE FUTURE

Less than a third of the youth felt that they had faced unusual difficulties in securing employment; a considerable proportion were readily absorbed into gainful employment, and most of the remainder were handicapped only by the general scarcity of jobs. If comparatively few youth had special complaints to make about the past, a large proportion (about four-fifths) had definite aspirations to voice for the future. What those plans were, and how they differed according to the characteristics of the youth questioned, are the subjects of this section.

Plans According to Sex

The "youth problem" is fundamentally economic in nature, and many of the non-economic problems of youth would be solved or ameliorated if economic opportunities were adequate. It is not surprising, therefore, that in voicing their plans for the future, most young people stressed economic objectives.

Table 96.—Youth's Plans for the Future, by Sex

Plans for the future	Total	Male	Female
	<i>Percent distribution</i>		
Total.....	100	100	100
Retain or advance in present job.....	22	25	19
Continue education.....	15	19	11
Secure better job.....	14	18	10
Secure employment.....	9	8	10
Continue household responsibilities.....	6	—	12
Get married.....	4	1	8
Enter civil service.....	3	5	1
Enter business.....	3	5	1
Other and unknown.....	5	3	7
None.....	19	16	21

That many youth felt themselves well established in gainful employment by the time of this study is shown by the fact that the largest single group (22 percent of the total) were planning to retain or advance in their present jobs.

The next largest group of youth with definite plans, consisting of 15 percent of all labor-market entrants, were mainly concerned with getting a better education. Included in this group were youth who left school for a semester or more to earn enough to continue their educations, youth who were taking additional courses while holding jobs, and youth who after leaving school for good saw the necessity of acquiring additional specialized training.

Nearly as large as the group planning to continue their educations was the group planning to secure better jobs (14 percent). These

were youth who had made some sort of start in gainful employment but were dissatisfied with their present situations or were ambitious to secure higher wages, better working conditions, better opportunities for advancement, or work more closely related to their training.

Traditionally the ambition of many youth has been to acquire enough capital to go into business for themselves. Yet only 3 percent of these youth said their major plan for the future was to enter business. This may indicate either that few youth saw any immediate prospects of being able to satisfy such an ambition, or that few cherished the ambition. In this connection it is significant that 3 percent of all labor-market youth also said their main plan for the future was to get civil service jobs. It is probable that as a result of the depression more young people have come to prefer jobs in the public service and fewer have sought self-employment.

The most important difference between the sexes in plans for the future is that boys were more concerned than girls about getting ahead in the labor market, while many girls either had already turned to homemaking as a career or were planning shortly to do so. It is important to note, however, that more girls were making plans about jobs than about homemaking. Though an increasing number of girls would turn to homemaking on a full-time basis as they grew older, at this early stage of their lives their main problems were like those of the boys—to get jobs if they were unemployed, or to advance in their work if they were employed.

Plans According to Education

The amount of education a youth has is one of the important elements determining the place he can make for himself in the world. Consequently, the outlook of young people on the future is more or less colored by the level of schooling they have attained.

Table 97.—Youth's Plans for the Future, by Education

Plans for the future	Years of education				
	8	9-11	12	13-15	16 and over
	Percent distribution				
Total.....	100	100	100	100	100
Retain or advance in present job.....	23	19	23	20	31
Continue education.....	7	9	16	39	17
Secure better job.....	11	14	14	10	17
Secure employment.....	7	10	9	9	15
Continue household responsibilities.....	10	8	5	2	—
Get married.....	4	4	5	3	4
Enter civil service.....	1	3	4	2	1
Enter business.....	3	4	3	2	3
Other and unknown.....	7	6	5	3	5
None.....	27	23	16	10	7

One of the most interesting points to note is that youth with the least education were most likely to report no plans for the future, whereas those with the most education were most likely to report definite plans. On the face of it, this result indicates merely a lack of interest in the question among youth with less education. On the other hand, it is probable that these youth were apathetic about the future because they saw little chance to better their present positions.

Among all youth except those who had attended but not completed college, the most frequently expressed ambition was to retain or advance in their present jobs. Generally speaking, this ambition signifies that youth were more or less satisfied with their place in the labor market. It is noteworthy that college graduates were most satisfied with their present jobs, and youth who had attended but not completed high school or college were least satisfied. Many young people in the latter two groups had failed to secure jobs of high-school or college level upon which they had counted.

Youth who had left college before getting their degrees most frequently reported plans to continue their educations; nearly two-fifths (39 percent) expressed this desire. Included in this group were many youth who had left college with the intention of returning as soon as they had earned enough to continue. Least anxious to continue their education were those with only grade-school or incompleting high-school educations; only 7 and 9 percent of these youth, respectively, mentioned plans for further schooling. However, about one-sixth (16 percent) of the high-school graduates spoke of continuing their educations. It is suggestive of the value youth attach to education that even among college graduates 17 percent felt inadequately equipped with a bachelor's degree.

College graduates were somewhat more likely than other youth to speak of plans for securing jobs or securing better jobs. Since they were among the latest entrants to the labor market, some of their number had not made satisfactory starts in gainful employment by the time this study was made. College graduates also were the most articulate about their plans, so that they registered high in the expression of opinions representing both satisfaction and dissatisfaction with their present situations.

One-tenth of the grade-school graduates said they planned to continue their household responsibilities, but the proportion declined steadily until it reached zero among the college graduates. This decline was due chiefly to the recency with which the better educated girls had left school, and the small proportion that were already married. However, the proportion of youth (chiefly girls) who reported plans for marriage was about the same at all levels of education.

Plans to enter business or the civil service were not associated closely with amount of education completed. The only difference

was a slight preference for civil-service jobs among high-school graduates, which probably reflects the fact that most job opportunities in government service are at the clerical level, for which graduation from high-school is the usual educational requirement.

Plans According to Activity on July 1, 1938

Youth's plans for the future were affected more by the situation in which they found themselves at the time of interview than by anything else. Those who were unemployed were primarily interested in getting jobs, and those who had jobs were intent upon advancing in them or were looking about for better jobs.

Table 98.—Youth's Plans for the Future, by Activity on July 1, 1938

Plans for the future	Activity on July 1, 1938								
	Employed			Unemployed			In school ²	House-wife ³	Other non-labor-market activity ³
	Total	Full time ¹	Part time ¹	Total	Work programs	Seeking work			
	Percent distribution								
Total.....	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
Retain or advance in present job.....	32	35	12	1	4	—	1	—	4
Continue education.....	13	13	18	16	18	15	79	5	19
Secure better job.....	19	17	32	7	39	—	•	—	3
Secure employment.....	—	—	—	42	—	51	13	8	25
Continue household responsibilities.....	•	—	1	•	•	•	—	55	5
Get married.....	5	5	4	2	2	3	•	1	7
Enter civil service.....	4	4	3	4	4	3	1	•	2
Enter business.....	4	4	3	2	3	2	1	1	2
Other and unknown.....	5	5	7	5	3	6	1	4	10
None.....	18	17	20	21	27	20	4	26	23

*Less than 0.5 percent.

¹ Jobs of 30 hours or more per week.

² Jobs of less than 30 hours per week.

³ Includes both labor-market entrants and youth who had never entered the labor market.

Within the largest group, that of youth currently employed, plans for the future differed considerably according to whether youth were engaged in full-time or part-time work. Those employed full time were more intent upon retaining or advancing in their present jobs (35 percent) than upon securing better jobs (17 percent). Among youth working part time, however, the largest group said they planned to secure better jobs (32 percent), and comparatively few (12 percent) were sufficiently well satisfied with their present jobs to wish to retain or advance in them. This fact tends to support the statement made earlier that young workers take part-time jobs primarily because they cannot obtain better jobs, and not because they prefer part-time jobs.

The unemployed were, of course, desirous for the most part of obtaining jobs in private industry. Two-fifths of the work-program

employees and one-half of the remaining unemployed reported specifically that their major plan for the future was to get a regular job. The proportion hoping to obtain jobs is raised even higher when youth planning to enter business or the civil service are included with those reporting only general plans to seek regular jobs. Very nearly the same proportion of unemployed youth as employed (16 and 13 percent, respectively) reported plans to continue their educations. These young workers evidently regarded further education as an aid both to securing better jobs and to securing any kind of jobs at all.

Youth still in school at the time of interview were more definite than any other youth about their plans for the future. Four-fifths said that they were most concerned about continuing their educations. These were mainly youth who had never left school for regular jobs. Their course was clear: to finish what they had started. It was mainly after young people had left school that they became confused or apathetic about their plans.

Most of the housewives planned to continue devoting their time to household responsibilities. Only 1 in 12 said she intended to enter or reenter the labor market. Most young women who become homemakers remain out of the labor market subsequently.

Youth engaged in other non-labor-market activities included those who were ill, those who were occupied as unpaid family workers, and all others who were neither employed nor unemployed. That many of these youth were temporarily inactive workers is shown by the fact that one-fourth planned to secure employment as soon as they could. Another one-fifth planned to resume their educations. Because of the mixed nature of this group, their plans were more varied than those of any other group of youth.

Plans According to Occupation

It was noted that youth employed full time when the study was made were concerned principally with advancing in their jobs. Since the desire to retain or advance in a job is a fairly good indication of satisfaction in one's progress to date, it is of interest to see how young workers employed in different occupations compared in this respect. This comparison as well as youth's other plans for the future according to occupational class is shown in table 99.

At least half of the youth working in the fields usually held to be at the top of the occupational pyramid—professional persons, proprietors, managers, and officials—thought their best opportunities for advancement were in their present jobs. Skilled workers and all clerical workers other than salespersons were the groups next most likely to report satisfaction with their present jobs. At the other extreme only 20 percent of the laborers and 16 percent of the domestic servants wished to retain or advance in their jobs. Youth's own

Table 99.—Youth's Plans for the Future, by Occupational Class of Full-Time Job on July 1, 1938

Plans for the future	Occupational class of full-time job on July 1, 1938												
	Professional	Proprietary, managerial, and official	Clerical						Skilled	Semiskilled	Unskilled		
			Total	Accounting and semi-professional	Stenography and allied	Other clerical	Sales	Total			Servant and domestic	Laborer	
													Total
Percent distribution													
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	
Retain or advance in present job	50	54	37	40	44	39	28	41	33	17	16	20	
Continue education	14	8	12	13	6	13	15	11	12	10	19	18	
Secure better job	22	12	15	13	12	15	17	16	18	24	22	26	
Get married	3	1	7	9	10	6	5	2	5	3	5	1	
Enter civil service	1	2	4	2	4	5	3	4	4	4	3	6	
Enter business	2	5	3	1	1	2	8	3	4	4	8	5	
Other and unknown	2	4	5	7	5	4	6	2	6	7	8	5	
None	6	14	17	15	18	16	18	16	18	22	24	18	

reactions to their jobs thus reflect pretty faithfully the advantages and disadvantages of the different occupations that were apparent in the earlier discussions of employment stability and wage levels.

Generally speaking, the occupational classes with the largest proportions of youth satisfied with their present jobs were likely to have the smallest proportions express plans for securing better jobs. One exception was in the case of youth holding professional jobs. The relatively high proportion of these youth who said they planned to secure better jobs (22 percent) may be due in part to the fact that they were among the most recent entrants to the labor market (having only recently graduated from college) and therefore had not yet found the best possible openings for employment.

The proportion of youth stating plans to get married was highest in the occupations in which girls are most numerous, i. e., in the clerical, semiskilled, and servant occupations. The withdrawal of girls to become homemakers means that opportunities for new workers are better in these occupations than in occupations having less turnover.

Salespersons and skilled workers were more likely than other youth to report plans for entering business. A shift to self-employment is a fairly natural step for youth in these occupations to take. For example, a salesman or painter may ply his trade almost equally well working for himself as for someone else, provided he has the capital and business ability to make a success of running his own enterprise.

Chapter VIII

CONCLUSIONS

THE PURPOSE of this report has been to examine the way in which youth in seven large cities passed through a critical transition period in their lives—when they left school and started to earn their own living. The characteristics of that transition process have been considered, as well as the success with which it was accomplished.

The results of the study have implications that are important for the welfare of both youth and the Nation. Although the economic problems of young people are bound closely to the general problem of securing fuller employment, knowledge of where particular blockages occur in youth's progress toward getting jobs can be of great assistance in showing how to attack the "youth problem." With more young workers able to obtain jobs, most of youth's problems, as of postponed marriage or excess leisure time, would be greatly mitigated. Better chances of employment would also bring greater economic security to the numerous disadvantaged young members of the labor force, and so would contribute powerfully to national morale. Also, the country cannot afford to lose the productive power of young workers when maximum utilization of the labor force is needed for national defense. Information concerning youth's transition to workers permits planning for their more successful absorption into jobs at a time when the Nation is more than ever concerned about strengthening both its inner defenses against want and its outer defenses against aggression.

YOUTH'S POSITION IN THE LABOR MARKET

The preceding examination of youth's activities indicates great variation in the way youth were absorbed into the labor force and the success they attained. In general, a relatively small proportion were either outstandingly successful or outstandingly unsuccessful; most young workers had fair, but only fair, success in making their way.

More specifically, few youth entered the labor market equipped with college educations or with only grade-school educations; the largest group consisted of high-school graduates. Because of the close relationship between amount of education and age at entering the labor market, few youth went to work before they were 16 or after they were 20; most entered the labor market at or near the age of 18. In respect to unemployment, relatively few youth escaped unscathed during the time they spent in the labor market, and relatively few underwent periods of unemployment lasting a year or longer; a considerable proportion of them went through some unemployment by the time of this study, but at any given time unemployment affected only a minority of youth. Again, when youth obtained jobs, comparatively few worked in the more difficult and responsible occupations, somewhat more worked in the least skilled occupations, and most worked in the middle-grade occupations. Finally, few youth had very high or very low earnings, compared with the great number who had earnings in the middle brackets.

The upshot of all this is that youth's economic position and problems must not be regarded as simple or uniform, but rather as having many different aspects, some of them extremely difficult. A minority of youth know definitely where their interests and abilities lie, are able to pursue their educations to the point needed for their chosen line of work, are able to secure jobs readily when they enter the labor market, and then advance quickly. This group certainly is smaller in a period of depression than in one of prosperity, but even in depression such youth make their way fairly readily. Improved economic conditions would permit them to get better jobs, earn higher wages, and feel more secure, but they have such definite advantages in the competition of the labor market that they are less seriously affected than most young workers by depressed business conditions.

Much larger in numbers, and harder hit by depression, is the great middle group of youth. The average young person in this group does not go beyond high school, starts to seek work at 17 or 18, qualifies mainly for clerical or semiskilled jobs, earns only moderate wages, and runs a considerable risk of unemployment.

The most serious aspect of the "youth problem" has to do with a third group of youth who may definitely be classed as disadvantaged. The problems of this group are so acute as to overshadow the fact that a small minority of young people are involved. Overrepresented in this disadvantaged group are youth from poorer homes and less favored social-economic classes. They usually are forced to leave school early and seek work under the twin handicaps of less education and less maturity. Finding themselves passed by when workers are hired, they come to think of their problem mainly as one of getting experience in order to compete for jobs under more favorable conditions.

Not only are they hard hit by unemployment, but when they get jobs it is usually at unskilled levels.

How, then, shall the general process of youth's transition to jobs be evaluated? It should be observed first that it is easy to fall into the fallacy of looking upon social and economic phenomena as white or black, and not (as should be the case) as lighter or darker shades of gray. Before 1929 it was generally assumed that youth's absorption into the labor market was almost automatic and necessitated little more social action than the provision of free public schooling. Yet for many youth there was certainly a darker side of the picture—schooling interrupted by poverty, uninformed choice of vocations, irregular or blind-alley employment, and low earnings.

Similarly, after 1929 economic distress was so widespread that the outlook for youth came to be looked upon as black indeed. Nevertheless, a majority of youth continued to make places for themselves, even though jobs were much harder to get than before the depression, advancement was slower, and earnings were generally less.

The fairest way to sum up the situation is to say that such hardships as youth faced before the depression were greatly intensified during the depression. Nearly all youth had greater difficulty in getting started than was the case earlier, and the proportion of those seriously disadvantaged undoubtedly increased considerably.

The present survey, by dealing comprehensively with the experiences of a cross section of large-city youth, gives the whole picture of their position in the labor market. The survey shows that a majority of young workers were employed at most points of their time in the labor market. This result may appear surprising in view of the recognized seriousness of the unemployment problem during the depression, but had it been otherwise the depression would have been a time not of crisis but of complete collapse. The survey also reveals that some youth were gravely handicapped in getting jobs. Certain recommendations for public policy that would assist nearly all youth apply even more urgently in the case of the most disadvantaged group.

Before considering recommendations for improving youth's position in the economy, the pervasive role of the social-economic background factors in affecting economic opportunity should be considered at greater length. To point out the significance of these relationships is to indicate some of the remedies needed.

THE BACKGROUND FACTORS

Although the change from student to worker is a sharp one for most youth, it is by no means a complete break with the past. The same social-economic forces that affect youth's progress at one stage of their lives usually affect it at others. These underlying forces, though they

operate with varying degrees of strength, react upon one another in complex fashion, and have a considerable bearing upon how fast and how far young people advance in the labor market.

At the risk of oversimplification, it is instructive to regard the background factors as interacting in somewhat the following fashion: The father's occupation and the level of the family's income affect youth's progress by the bearing they have upon the section of the city in which the youth is brought up, the amount of schooling he is able to get, his age at time of entrance to the labor market, and even the degree of his advancement or retardation in school. The effects of these background factors are in turn reflected in the ease with which the youth gets jobs, the amount of unemployment he undergoes, and the occupational and earnings levels he reaches in the labor market. These limitations upon youth's progress are sharply intensified by race.

Of course, some youth fail to make the most of the advantages they have, and some overcome their early disadvantages. The economic and social environment in which a youth is brought up, however, usually sets limits to his ability and initiative. A chain of circumstances reaching back into their early lives to a considerable extent determines the social-economic level most young people are able to reach.

The implications of this generalization are far-reaching. We are too accustomed to thinking that youth make of themselves exactly what they will. For example, the provision of free public schooling is generally believed to guarantee equal educational opportunity, and the rest is thought to be up to youth themselves. However, a youth whose earnings are needed at home cannot afford to go so far in school as those from more prosperous homes. Particularly during the depression, youth from "the other side of the tracks" have found it harder to compete on a basis of equal educational opportunity with those from wealthier homes. If class lines are not to harden, restrictions upon the opportunities of these youth must be removed.

NEEDS OF YOUTH

Certain conclusions with respect to what youth's problems are and what needs to be done about them stand out sharply from the analysis of their absorption into the labor market. Society's interest in youth's successful economic adjustment is so great that efforts to promote that adjustment should not be permitted to falter. Continued efforts to meet the needs of youth constructively will pay dividends not only in the improved economic position of young people, but also in their devotion to democracy and their ability to participate effectively in the national defense effort.

Economic Security

By far the most urgent problem facing youth is getting a job and earning a decent living. The disruption of economic relationships since 1929 has borne more heavily upon youth, in terms of incidence of unemployment, than upon any other age group. In all too many cases the result has been depressed living standards or outright poverty, and frequently personal or social maladjustment as well.

The most direct attack upon youth's economic problems involves raising the general level of economic activity. Under conditions of more nearly full employment young people would be able to afford further schooling, would encounter fewer obstacles in getting jobs, and would earn more adequate wages.

It must be remembered, however, that even economic revival, essential though it is, would leave many problems affecting youth unsolved. For instance, some youth would still be unable to continue their schooling because of economic pressure at home; some would be unable to choose vocations intelligently because of lack of knowledge of trends in occupational opportunities, and inability to appraise their own aptitudes. In addition, the most disadvantaged group, containing many Negro, unskilled, physically handicapped, or poorly educated youth, would find their economic opportunities only slightly improved, and would still be more exposed to unemployment than other youth. It is desirable, therefore, to consider what measures would contribute toward a solution of the problems that bear most directly upon the efforts of young people to "get started." What follows applies to the period of national emergency ahead, but it will apply with even greater force when the Nation undergoes the difficult transition to a peacetime economy after the war.

Work Programs for Youth

During the past decade public emergency employment has proved to be an effective means of attacking at one and the same time a number of youth's economic problems. The NYA, CCC, and WPA have furnished much-needed income to many thousands of youth unable to get private jobs. The experience gained on these public work projects has enabled many youth to become better qualified for private employment. The student work program of the NYA has made it possible for great numbers of young people to continue their educations, thus improving their economic chances later in life. More recently, the emergency work programs have contributed to the national defense effort by training workers for jobs in defense industries, and by concentrating more and more upon projects related to the defense effort.

In the period of heightened defense activity that lies ahead, public work programs for youth have a place of continuing importance. By helping to supply financial assistance and training to needy youth, especially those in the younger age groups, such agencies can help prepare them for their future responsibilities in regular jobs or military service. It seems particularly desirable that the student work program of the NYA be available to young people of high-school age. As shown in this study, youth who enter the labor market at an early age and with less education have the poorest chances of competing effectively for jobs.

The spread of free public schooling in this country, especially since about the turn of the century, has opened the gates of educational opportunity to millions of young people. Nevertheless, even free schooling involves costs to youth and their families—either of personal or school expenses that otherwise would not have been incurred, or of earnings foregone. Thus most boys and girls from poorer homes are not so well able to continue their educations beyond the grade-school level as boys and girls from wealthier homes. As shown in this study, the boys and girls most likely to leave school early are those from poorer homes. Public work programs can do much to equalize educational opportunity by assisting financially such youth.

Vocational Guidance

Although youth were not specifically asked in this study about the extent or nature of the vocational guidance they received, there are indications that many needed such guidance who did not receive it.¹ The most interesting evidence to this effect is that so many boys went to work in the clerical field, where earnings, particularly in sales work and the less specialized branches of office work, were relatively low. Of course, the occupations youth enter are determined more by the nature of production at any given time than by the kind of training youth acquire. Nevertheless, it seems that many boys who prepared for white-collar jobs would have made out better in skilled manual work in the long run, even allowing for the greater stability of clerical work. There seems little doubt that many youth prepare themselves for white-collar jobs because of the widespread impression that such jobs are somehow more respectable or have greater prestige. It appears that many boys would have preferred to prepare for skilled manual work rather than clerical work if they had known such facts as this study shows about the relative earnings of youth in these two broad occupational fields.

¹ Independent evidence indicates that few youth receive vocational guidance. In the Maryland youth survey, conducted in 1936, only 23 percent of the youth studied reported that they had received any vocational guidance from other than their relatives. (Bell, Howard M., *Youth Tell Their Story*, American Council on Education, Washington, D. C., 1938, p. 74.)

In this line of reasoning there is no intention of suggesting that boys ought to be encouraged indiscriminately to prepare for jobs as skilled mechanics, or for jobs in any other field that appears generally promising. It is suggested rather that if a boy's aptitudes and interests are studied, the opportunities and trends in the important occupations in his community carefully evaluated for his guidance, and the pros and cons of choosing different occupations pointed out to him, he will be more likely to make an intelligent choice of a vocation. Because of the ever-increasing participation of women in paid employment, the same recommendations for vocational counseling apply in the case of girls.

Other evidence suggesting that many youth made uninformed choices of vocations is contained in the figures on moves from one occupation to another, particularly to unrelated occupations. This does not imply that occupational mobility as such is undesirable, for it often is the means by which workers improve their status. Even with adequate vocational guidance, youth would sometimes shift to different occupations as conditions changed. And many young people in this study were unable, at first, to find jobs in the fields for which they had prepared. Nevertheless, the extent of false starts, and the necessity for subsequent changes in occupation, would undoubtedly have been less if youth had been better informed about where their best chances lay.

Vocational guidance is not a cure-all. It cannot create jobs where they do not exist. Nevertheless, jobs sometimes go unfilled because properly trained workers are not available to fill them. The program for youth should certainly include a strengthening of guidance programs in schools where they now exist, and their extension to schools where they do not now exist. In this way the number of occupational misfits will be reduced, and much waste motion eliminated. Community surveys on occupational opportunities, surveys on changing occupational trends in the Nation and the new skills needed by workers to qualify for jobs, together with research on better means of testing youth's aptitudes for different kinds of employment are all needed to improve the present underdeveloped system of vocational guidance.

Vocational Training

The optimum organization of the educational system and the content of its curricula are still unsettled questions. It must be recognized, however, that for the great majority of youth the schools must furnish preparation for making a living as well as for living. An important means by which such practical instruction may be given is through vocational training. A detailed analysis of the experiences of youth trained under the federally aided Smith-Hughes program of vocational education has been made for youth in four

of the cities included in the survey of youth in the labor market.² The recommendations of that report are very briefly reviewed at this point to indicate how vocational training may assist youth in finding a place in the labor market.

In the first place, it must be recognized that vocational training cannot create jobs. It can, however, help some youth through the difficult period of getting started in the labor market by giving them efficient instruction in fields where jobs do exist. In order that vocational training programs may operate most effectively, it is desirable that their enrollees be carefully selected, the standards of instruction be on a high level, and the courses of instruction be integrated with the needs of the labor market.

The vocational training courses should not be regarded as desirable mainly for students who are unable to advance in the academic courses. Instead, vocational training should be recognized to be as important as nonvocational instruction in the school curriculum, and as a privilege for those youth to elect who are interested in and likely to profit by receiving training in specialized skills. Vocational guidance and vocational testing can be valuable adjuncts in selecting those who will gain most from vocational training.

To achieve maximum effectiveness, vocational training courses must be of high quality. Skilled teachers and up-to-date equipment must be provided. The courses of study should be made as complete as possible, for the most thorough and specific sorts of training appear to be the most effective.³

A further requirement for successful vocational training is that it be related to labor-market needs. This means careful planning of both the kinds of courses to be offered and the number of youth to be trained in each. To this end, closer and more cooperative relationships are needed between employers, unions, schools, and youth-serving public agencies.

The role of the NYA and WPA in promoting vocational education should also be mentioned. The efforts of these agencies are especially important at the present time, when the Nation is in need of efficient workers to produce materials needed for national defense. The NYA, through its student work program, assists youth to remain in school and gain further training for jobs. The same agency, through its out-of-school work program, helps youth gain the practical work experience that improves their chances of obtaining jobs in private industry. This program now places major emphasis upon training youth for jobs in defense occupations. The WPA is also

² Menefee, Selden C., *Vocational Training and Employment of Youth*, Monograph No. XXV, Division of Research, Work Projects Administration, Federal Works Agency, Washington, D. C., 1942.

³ Menefee, *op. cit.*, p. 105.



Federal Security Agency.

Young Job Seeker.

playing an important role in promoting vocational education related to defense needs through its preemployment and refresher courses and its in-plant training courses in defense industries.

Public Employment Offices

The advantages of public employment offices in securing a more effective and rational organization of the labor market have often been pointed out. Employment agencies of course cannot create jobs where they do not exist, but they can cut down much of the lost motion of job seeking and recruitment of labor. Though conditions have undoubtedly changed somewhat since youth in this study sought jobs, it is important to remember that only 4 percent of all jobs these youth held up to July 1938 were obtained through public and private employment agencies combined. It is therefore not amiss to point out that the necessity of acquainting employers and workers with the services of the public employment offices is a continuing one.

A noteworthy development in the operation of public employment offices has been the introduction of "junior divisions,"⁴ which have to do with the placement of youth who have little or no employment experience. Considerable improvement could undoubtedly be made in helping youth adjust to jobs if the placement functions of the employment offices and the vocational guidance functions of the schools were better coordinated. Placement should be viewed as the logical next step after vocational guidance and instruction. The schools, guided by information on occupational trends and skill requirements furnished by the public employment offices, should consider it one of their important responsibilities to give youth adequate vocational guidance. Then when boys and girls leave school they should be referred to the employment office for assistance in getting jobs. It is important at this stage that the schools furnish to the junior divisions of the employment service full information on the youth's educational background, the results of vocational aptitude tests, etc., in order that classification of young job seekers may be expedited. The employment service, having the best information available both on job opportunities in the community and on the characteristics of the young people seeking jobs, can then concentrate effectively on placement.⁵

THE OUTLOOK FOR YOUTH

Though the "youth problem" came dramatically to the fore during the thirties, it was not a new phenomenon then, and it is not likely

⁴ The Wagner-Peyser Act, under which the present system of Federal-State Employment Services was established, makes explicit mention of "juniors" as a group whose needs are to be met.

⁵ For an excellent critical analysis of the U. S. Employment Service as it affects young workers, see Bell, Howard M., *Matching Youth and Jobs*, American Council on Education, Washington, D. C., 1940.

now to disappear overnight. Of course, immediate prospects for youth are affected more by the defense program than by any other recent development. The withdrawal of several million young men into the armed forces will greatly relieve the pressure for jobs, and youth who remain in the civilian labor market will be in greater demand as workers in defense industries. There are, however, several important factors which qualify the generally expansive tendencies in the labor market at the present time.

In the first place, long-term population trends are such that the number of youth will continue to increase until about 1944; this means increased competition among young workers for jobs. The greatest expansion of jobs is likely to be in the occupations requiring specific skills, and if youth are to be absorbed in great numbers into such jobs there will be great need of specialized training. There will be difficult problems of transfer from nondefense to defense industries, and probably a good deal of temporary unemployment resulting from curtailment of nondefense industries. Many communities will get little or no net increase in employment as a result of defense activity. If higher wages in defense industries draw many farm youth to the cities, urban unemployment may remain high even though employment also rises. Youth from poorer homes will probably still have difficulty in getting the training they need for jobs, and disadvantaged minority groups may still face hiring prejudices.

The upshot of all this is that defense expansion holds the promise of great amelioration of youth's economic problems, but at the same time many youth will still face difficulties in completing their training and making a satisfactory adjustment in the labor market. It should also be remembered that the stimulus of the defense program is temporary, and afterwards there will be difficult problems of transition to a peacetime economy. A rounded and adequate program, therefore, to facilitate the transfer of youth from school to satisfactory jobs is and will continue to be essential, both to secure youth's full services in the defense emergency and to prepare for the problems that are likely to arise afterwards. By helping young people to make a place for themselves in the Nation's economy, we can at the same time guarantee their devotion to democracy and provide them with the opportunities to defend that democracy. This is both the responsibility and the opportunity of the Nation.

APPENDIXES

Appendix A

METHODOLOGY

YOUTH INCLUDED in the survey of youth in the labor market were chosen at random from eighth-grade graduation lists of both public and parochial¹ schools in 1929, 1931, and 1933. Graduates at the January midterm of each of these years² and summer-school graduates were included along with those graduated at the end of the regular school term.

Eighth-grade graduates were chosen because school records form a direct and economical means of obtaining a comprehensive sample of youth,³ and more than 9 out of 10 urban children complete the eighth grade. Although it might seem that the exclusion of the 1 youth in 10 who lacks an eighth-grade diploma might seriously affect the presentation of the youth problem, independent investigation does not bear out this contention.⁴ However, if the study had

¹ Graduation lists were not obtained from every parochial school, in some cases because the records were not available, in others because the number of graduates was so small. In Birmingham, for example, the 6 Catholic grade schools annually graduate a total of less than 100 persons. It is estimated that the total number of parochial school graduates excluded from the universe was considerably less than 1,000.

² The school year in San Francisco ends in May and the midterm ends in December of the preceding year. San Francisco midterm graduates of December 1928, December 1930, and December 1932 were included as 1929, 1931, and 1933 graduates, respectively.

³ In some cities the interposition of junior high schools between grade schools and high schools made it necessary to use the less convenient grade-to-grade promotion records from the eighth grade to the ninth grade, both grades being within the junior high schools.

⁴ From unpublished data from a survey conducted in 1938 in Denver by the Bureau of Business and Social Research of the University of Denver. The inclusion or exclusion of youth who had not completed the eighth grade had no significant effect upon the proportion of youth unemployed. The published information from this survey appears in Carmichael, F. L. and Wiedeman, H. C., *The Youth Problem in Denver*, University of Denver Reports, Vol. 14, No. 2, Denver, Colo., July 1938.

been restricted to high-school graduates, as has been the case in many surveys of youth, 4 out of 10 youth would have been eliminated from consideration.

Graduation lists for 1929, 1931, and 1933 were taken because these graduates were "depression's children,"—youth who entered the labor market during the depression years—and because in 1938 when the study was made⁵ they were concentrated in the ages 17 through 25 years, the age bracket usually referred to in discussions of youth. In connection with this statement, it is not claimed that single ages taken separately in this survey are fully representative of all youth of these ages. If the normal age at time of graduating from the eighth grade is 14 years, the normal age of members of the three classes in 1938 would be 23, 21, and 19 years, respectively. Consequently, youth in the study who were 17 years of age in 1938 must represent an advanced group, while youth 25 years of age must represent a retarded group. This limitation is not serious in discussing youth as a whole.

By interviewing grade-school graduates of these years another complication is minimized. Experiences reported for these youth largely took place within the city in which they had graduated from the eighth grade five to nine years earlier. Migrants, both into and away from the city, were excluded except those who had graduated within the city and left for a time but returned by 1938. Independent investigation again reveals that exclusion of migrants does not seriously affect conclusions about the youth problem.⁶

When graduation lists were compiled for the seven cities, a total of almost 91,000 youth were included. Limitations of time and money would permit study of approximately 40,000 youth. The determination of the number to be studied in each city was based upon a desire to be able to make equally reliable statements about youth in each of the seven cities. Statistically, this meant that it was not necessary to study as high a proportion of youth in the large cities as in the small cities. Thus, a random sample of only 31 percent of St. Louis youth was studied as against 76 percent of Duluth youth.⁷ All Binghamton

⁵ The date of enumeration was July 1, 1938.

⁶ From further unpublished data obtained by the University of Denver survey (see footnote 4, p. 151.). The inclusion or exclusion of youth who had come to the city after graduating from the eighth grade elsewhere did not affect the proportion of youth unemployed.

Questionnaires sent to youth who had left the seven cities in the present survey reveal practically the same proportion of unemployment as among those who remained in the cities. See p. 157.

⁷ See Stock, J. Stevens and Frankel, Lester R., "The Allocation of Samplings Among Several Strata," *The Annals of Mathematical Statistics*, Vol. X, No. 3, September 1939, p. 288. This article reports the method followed by the authors to determine the sampling ratios for the survey of youth in the labor market.

youth were studied because the indicated proportion was relatively close to 100 percent.⁸ In this way 41,000 youth were selected for interview.

Locating youth for interview was a major task confronting the survey staff. School records, ordinarily, were of great help in locating either the youth or his parents, who could give his address. In the 5 to 9 years elapsed between the eighth-grade graduation and the time of interview, however, some youth had made several changes of address and some girls had changed their last names. And in one school the only available testimony as to the graduates of the 1929 class was a group picture taken at the graduation exercises. Fortunately, most of these youth could be identified by former teachers.

In addition, city directories, telephone directories, records of the YMCA, YWCA, YMHA, Catholic youth organizations, community centers, real-estate offices, public utilities, former classmates, teachers, and neighbors were resorted to in tracing the youth. Girls not located under their maiden names were looked up in the marriage license records. Toward the end of the survey some local newspapers printed names of youth who had not yet been found, asking them to call the survey offices.

Despite all these efforts, only 30,075 youth were interviewed.⁹ About 7,250 had moved from the city permanently or were away at school for the duration of the study.¹⁰ Another 2,600 youth could not be located, although it was not established that all of these had left the city. About 500 were deceased and another 100 either were in institutions or were too ill to be interviewed. In spite of several attempts to interview them, 300 youth were never found at home. Only 100 gave direct refusals to the interviewers. In all, the youth not interviewed totaled 10,934.

The question immediately arises as to how the youth not interviewed may have differed from the youth who were interviewed. Had all youth been interviewed would the conclusions be invalidated, strengthened, or left unchanged? Would the various conditions confronting youth have appeared accentuated or moderated?

Although this question cannot be answered categorically, certain characteristics of the not-interviewed group may be compared with the same characteristics of the interviewed group. The sex, age, race, and section of city of most not-interviewed youth could be determined from school records. In addition, a simple questionnaire was mailed to those who had left the seven cities and for whom a forwarding address was obtained. About 1,700 responses were received to these questionnaires.

⁸ See table A at the end of this appendix.

⁹ See table B at the end of this appendix.

¹⁰ See table C at the end of this appendix.

A comparison of the two groups indicates that youth not interviewed did differ noticeably in some respects from interviewed youth. At the same time, the comparison gives some reassurance that conclusions drawn about the youth problem from the interviewed group vary only in slight degree from conclusions which would be drawn from facts known about the two groups together.

An average of 73 of each 100 youth chosen for study were interviewed. One of the most important variations in the proportions interviewed is seen in a comparison of the three class years:

<i>Class of eighth-grade graduation:</i>	<i>Percent of youth interviewed</i>
1929.....	69
1931.....	74
1933.....	78

As would be expected, the longer the time elapsed since eighth-grade graduation the smaller was the proportion interviewed. More 1929 than 1931 graduates and more 1931 than 1933 graduates had left the city, were deceased, or could not be traced. The net result is that the not-interviewed group were on the average about a half year older (22 years) than the interviewed group (21½ years) on July 1, 1938.

In cities where the race factor is important a higher proportion of whites than of Negroes or orientals was interviewed. For example, in Birmingham 73 out of each 100 white youth were interviewed as against only 66 of each 100 Negro youth, and in San Francisco 76 of each 100 white youth were interviewed as against 70 of each 100 oriental youth. It was much more difficult to trace the Negro youth, while a very high proportion of the oriental youth had moved from the city.

City variations in the proportion interviewed were marked:

<i>City:</i>	<i>Percent of youth interviewed</i>
Binghamton, N. Y.....	77
Birmingham, Ala.....	71
Denver, Colo.....	69
Duluth, Minn.....	74
St. Louis, Mo.....	78
San Francisco, Calif.....	75
Seattle, Wash.....	70

In the largest and smallest cities, St. Louis and Binghamton, respectively, the highest percentages of interviews were secured. The smallest percentages of interviews were made in Denver and Seattle. More youth had left Denver than any of the other cities, while in Seattle the proportions who had left the city and who could not be traced were both high.

For the three classes combined, a slightly higher proportion of females were interviewed than of males.

<i>Sex and eighth-grade classes:</i>	<i>Percent of youth interviewed</i>
Male graduates of 1929.....	70
Female graduates of 1929.....	68
Male graduates of 1931.....	72
Female graduates of 1931.....	75
Male graduates of 1933.....	76
Female graduates of 1933.....	79

Among the graduates of each of the three years the proportion of females who could not be traced was larger, however, than the proportion of males. A most important factor in the comparative difficulty in tracing young women was that many of them had married and changed their names. Although the marriage license records in the seven cities were exhaustively searched, the records in near-by towns were not examined. Consequently, the proportion of married women is probably understated in the report. In each graduating class there were more boys than girls who could not be interviewed because they were attending school outside the city.

Youth from sections of the city having high rental values were interviewed in lower proportion than those from sections having medium or low rental values:

<i>Section of city (rental areas):</i>	<i>Percent of youth interviewed</i>
Low.....	75
Medium.....	75
High.....	70

The proportions of youth who had left the city and who were away at school were greatest in the high rental areas.

From these comparisons it is difficult to judge the effect of under-enumeration upon the survey results. Taking the known proportions of unemployment among the various groups of interviewed youth as representing the seriousness of the youth problem in those groups, it may be seen that the higher loss of 1929 graduates, older youth, males, orientals, and youth from high rental areas would tend to increase the figures for unemployment, while the high loss of Negroes would reduce them.

As a further test of the possibility of bias in the results, a simple post-card questionnaire was mailed to almost 5,000 youth who had moved from the 7 cities. This number did not include all youth who had left the cities but only those for whom forwarding addresses were available. The questions asked were: the date of leaving the city, the reason for leaving, the activity during the preceding week, and the last grade completed in school.

Replies were received from 1,694 youth residing in 44 different States and in many foreign countries. Almost half of the replies (48 percent), however, were from youth who were in the same States where they attended grade school.

<i>City in which youth had graduated from the eighth grade:</i>	<i>Percent of questionnaire replies postmarked in the same State</i>
Binghamton, N. Y.....	73
Birmingham, Ala.....	36
Denver, Colo.....	38
Duluth, Minn.....	50
St. Louis, Mo.....	32
San Francisco, Calif.....	76
Seattle, Wash.....	50

The reasons given for leaving the cities ranged from the prosaic "moved with family" to the distinctive "indiscretion concerning slot machines." One young man reported leaving the city to "follow fiancee," and a young woman left the city because she was "separated from husband." Only six youth gave reasons that could clearly be catalogued as wanderlust, the clearest of these being "to see what was on the other side of the mountain." About 80 boys replied that they left the city to join the CCC, Army, Navy, or Marines, but whether the underlying reason was wanderlust or economic pressure is not known. Almost a fourth of the reasons for leaving the city among young women was given in the one all-inclusive word "marriage," but only one young man gave this reason.

By far the most important basic reason for having left the city was to better economic conditions. Over half of the males and almost two-fifths of the females reported that they left the city for such reasons as "To seek work," "Secured better job," "Father transferred," "Husband secured job elsewhere," and "Financial reasons." In addition, the underlying reason for leaving the city must frequently have been economic in such common responses as "Family moved," and "To live with relatives."¹¹

The majority of 1929 graduates who responded to the questionnaires had left the seven cities since the autumn of 1935, the majority of 1931 graduates since the spring of 1936, and the majority of 1933 graduates since the early part of 1937. The relative recency of these movements probably is not true of all graduates who left the cities. It is much more likely that the more recent departees were in the majority in receiving and answering the questionnaire.

As among youth who were interviewed, the majority who replied to the questionnaires had completed high school, but almost a third had gone on to college. Over 10 percent of the reasons given for

¹¹ See table D at the end of this appendix.

leaving the city were "To enter school." It has been noted that the proportion of youth not interviewed because they were away at school was greatest among those from high rental areas.

The most important of the questions answered by youth who had left the city concerned their activities during the preceding week.¹² For comparison with the interviewed youth these activities are classified in three categories:

<i>Employment status:</i>	<i>Youth replying to questionnaires</i>	<i>Youth interviewed</i>
Total	100	100
Employed	52	57
Unemployed	13	13
Not seeking work	35	30

The proportion of the total who were unemployed is the same for both groups. If the comparison is confined to youth active in the labor market (employed or unemployed) the proportions unemployed are 20 percent for those returning questionnaires and 19 percent for those interviewed.

From the results of the questionnaire study it seems reasonable to conclude that, while youth who could not be interviewed were not precisely comparable to those who were interviewed, their exclusion from the interviewed group did not seriously affect the results of the survey.

(A facsimile of the schedule used in the youth survey is presented at the end of this appendix.)

Table A.—Number of Youth Graduated From the Eighth Grade in 1929, 1931, and 1933 and Number Selected for Study, by City

City	Total graduates	Graduates selected for study	
		Number	Percent of total graduates
7-city total	88,734	41,009	46.2
Binghamton, N. Y.	3,455	3,455	100.0
Birmingham, Ala.	9,189	5,419	59.0
Denver, Colo.	10,375	5,827	56.2
Duluth, Minn.	4,279	3,248	75.9
St. Louis, Mo.	26,975	8,293	30.7
San Francisco, Calif.	19,708	7,804	39.5
Seattle, Wash.	14,693	6,963	47.4

¹² The questionnaires were not mailed to the youth until the last three months of the field work. Consequently, the activity during the week preceding receipt of the post cards is not strictly comparable with the July 1, 1938, activity of interviewed youth.

Table B.—Number of Youth Selected for Study and Number Interviewed, by City

City	Youth selected for study	Youth interviewed	
		Number	Percent of total selected
7-city total	41,009	30,075	73.3
Binghamton, N. Y.	3,455	2,666	77.2
Birmingham, Ala.	5,419	3,827	70.6
Denver, Colo.	5,827	4,019	69.0
Duluth, Minn.	3,248	2,412	74.3
St. Louis, Mo.	8,203	6,429	77.5
San Francisco, Calif.	7,804	5,581	75.4
Seattle, Wash.	6,963	4,841	69.5

Table C.—Number of Youth Not Interviewed, by Reason

Reason not interviewed	Number of youth	Percent of total selected	Percent of total not interviewed
Total youth selected for study	41,009	100.0	—
Total not interviewed.....	10,934	26.7	100.0
Absent from city	7,251	17.7	66.3
Away at school.....	915	2.3	8.3
In CCC.....	118	0.3	1.1
In enlisted services.....	389	0.9	3.6
Moved from city.....	5,829	14.2	53.3
Not located.....	2,614	6.4	23.9
Deceased.....	480	1.2	4.4
In institutions.....	79	0.2	0.7
Ill.....	40	0.1	0.4
Three or more calls—no interview.....	286	0.7	2.6
Refused information.....	99	0.2	0.9
Other reasons.....	85	0.2	0.8

Table D.—Youth's Reasons for Leaving the 7 Cities as Reported on Post-card Questionnaires, by Sex

Reason for leaving city	Total	Male	Female
Total youth reporting:			
Number.....	1,694	844	850
Percent.....	100.0	100.0	100.0
Economic reasons.....	45.2	51.7	38.8
To seek work.....	8.9	12.8	5.1
To better working conditions.....	20.9	28.0	13.9
Parents' business reasons.....	10.3	8.6	12.0
Husband's business reasons.....	3.2	—	6.3
Other economic reasons.....	1.9	2.3	1.5
Indefinite family reasons.....	16.0	15.6	16.4
Marriage.....	12.0	0.1	23.8
To enter school.....	10.6	12.0	9.2
Health.....	3.0	2.1	3.9
To join CCC or enlisted services.....	4.7	9.5	—
Wanderlust.....	0.3	0.6	0.1
Unclassified reasons.....	6.1	6.5	5.6
Question unanswered.....	2.1	1.9	2.2

SSS 100

**DIVISION OF SOCIAL RESEARCH
VPA
SURVEY OF YOUTH IN THE LABOR MARKET**

City _____

Schedule No. _____

Date Filled _____

(All information on this schedule is strictly confidential!)

Signature of Interviewer _____

A. IDENTIFICATION AND CHARACTERISTICS				B. TRAINING			
1. Name _____		2. 8th grade class _____		1. Years of school completed _____		2. Date first left school _____	
3. Name of school _____		4. G. S. E. _____		3. Months left school _____			
5. Present address _____		6. Sex _____		4. Vocational training courses completed:			
7. Date of birth _____		8. Color _____		a. Public or parochial high school _____		b. What type of training? _____	
10. Usual occupation and industry of father _____		9. Date married _____		c. College, university, or professional school _____		d. Principal course _____	

C. HISTORY SINCE FIRST LEAVING SCHOOL											
Line No.	Activity or occupation	Industry	Code	Program	Hours worked per week	Weekly earnings	Dates		If less than 30 days, how long did it last?	Code	How learned of job opening (Enter only if "P.E." in col. 4)
							Month & year	Month & year			
1	2	3	(a)	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
1	In full time school										
2											
3											
4											
5											
6											
7											
8											
9											
10											
11											
12											
13											
14											
15											
16											

D. GENERAL			
1. Date of first public employment office registration _____	3. Plans for the future _____	4. Remarks _____	
2. Special difficulties in securing job _____			

Appendix B

SUPPLEMENTARY TABLES

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Table 1.—Activities of Labor-Market Entrants of the 1929 Eighth-Grade Graduating Class, by Month, January 1, 1929–July 1, 1938, and by Sex

Year and month	Male				Female				
	Total	Youth in school	Others not seeking work	Youth in labor market	Total	Youth in school	House-wives	Others not seeking work	Youth in labor market
<i>Percent distribution</i>									
1929									
January.....	100.0	99.3	*	0.7	100.0	99.6	*	0.1	0.3
February.....	100.0	97.1	0.4	2.5	100.0	97.6	0.1	0.7	1.6
March.....	100.0	96.9	0.3	2.8	100.0	97.0	0.1	0.8	2.1
April.....	100.0	96.8	0.3	2.9	100.0	96.9	0.2	0.8	2.1
May.....	100.0	96.7	0.3	3.0	100.0	96.7	0.2	0.8	2.3
June.....	100.0	96.1	0.4	3.5	100.0	96.3	0.3	0.9	2.5
July.....	100.0	88.6	1.3	10.1	100.0	89.4	0.5	3.1	7.0
August.....	100.0	88.5	1.1	10.4	100.0	89.4	0.5	2.9	7.2
September.....	100.0	88.4	1.0	10.6	100.0	89.4	0.5	2.5	7.6
October.....	100.0	88.3	0.7	11.0	100.0	89.3	0.6	2.3	7.8
November.....	100.0	88.0	0.7	11.3	100.0	88.9	0.6	2.3	8.2
December.....	100.0	87.6	0.8	11.6	100.0	88.7	0.7	2.2	8.4
1930									
January.....	100.0	86.8	0.9	12.3	100.0	88.1	0.8	2.4	8.7
February.....	100.0	85.9	1.3	12.8	100.0	86.9	0.8	2.8	9.5
March.....	100.0	85.6	1.3	13.1	100.0	86.8	0.7	2.9	9.6
April.....	100.0	85.2	1.2	13.6	100.0	86.2	0.8	3.0	10.0
May.....	100.0	84.8	1.3	13.9	100.0	86.0	0.9	2.9	10.2
June.....	100.0	84.4	1.3	14.3	100.0	85.7	0.9	3.0	10.4
July.....	100.0	80.3	1.6	18.1	100.0	81.6	1.2	4.0	13.2
August.....	100.0	80.2	1.5	18.3	100.0	81.6	1.2	3.9	13.3
September.....	100.0	80.3	1.5	18.2	100.0	81.5	1.3	3.8	13.4
October.....	100.0	80.4	1.4	18.2	100.0	81.6	1.4	3.4	13.6
November.....	100.0	80.1	1.5	18.4	100.0	81.3	1.4	3.4	13.9
December.....	100.0	80.0	1.6	18.4	100.0	81.0	1.6	3.4	14.0
1931									
January.....	100.0	79.2	1.6	19.2	100.0	80.4	1.7	3.7	14.2
February.....	100.0	77.6	1.8	20.6	100.0	79.3	1.9	4.2	14.6
March.....	100.0	77.3	1.9	20.8	100.0	78.9	2.0	4.2	14.9
April.....	100.0	76.9	1.8	21.3	100.0	78.5	2.1	4.0	15.4
May.....	100.0	76.4	1.7	21.9	100.0	78.2	2.3	4.1	15.4
June.....	100.0	76.0	1.6	22.4	100.0	77.4	2.4	4.2	16.0
July.....	100.0	71.3	2.2	26.5	100.0	72.2	2.9	5.7	19.2
August.....	100.0	71.2	2.2	26.6	100.0	72.2	2.9	5.6	19.3
September.....	100.0	71.3	2.1	26.6	100.0	72.2	3.1	5.6	19.1
October.....	100.0	71.8	2.1	26.1	100.0	72.4	3.3	5.1	19.2
November.....	100.0	71.6	2.2	26.2	100.0	72.1	3.5	4.9	19.5
December.....	100.0	71.2	2.3	26.5	100.0	71.7	3.6	4.9	19.8
1932									
January.....	100.0	70.4	2.5	27.1	100.0	71.1	3.8	5.0	20.1
February.....	100.0	69.5	2.5	28.0	100.0	70.3	3.8	5.1	20.8
March.....	100.0	69.1	2.4	28.5	100.0	69.8	4.0	5.4	20.8
April.....	100.0	68.6	2.5	28.9	100.0	69.5	4.3	5.4	20.8
May.....	100.0	68.2	2.3	29.5	100.0	69.0	4.5	5.6	20.9
June.....	100.0	67.8	2.4	29.8	100.0	68.5	4.6	5.5	21.4
July.....	100.0	62.5	3.1	34.4	100.0	62.6	4.9	7.1	25.4
August.....	100.0	62.5	3.1	34.4	100.0	62.5	5.1	7.1	25.3
September.....	100.0	62.4	3.1	34.5	100.0	62.4	5.3	7.0	25.3
October.....	100.0	63.1	2.9	34.0	100.0	62.8	5.5	6.5	25.2
November.....	100.0	62.8	2.9	34.3	100.0	62.4	5.6	6.5	25.5
December.....	100.0	62.6	2.9	34.5	100.0	62.1	5.8	6.4	25.7
1933									
January.....	100.0	59.6	3.6	36.8	100.0	59.1	6.3	7.3	27.3
February.....	100.0	54.9	3.8	41.3	100.0	54.2	6.6	8.8	30.4
March.....	100.0	54.4	3.7	41.9	100.0	53.3	6.7	8.9	31.1
April.....	100.0	54.0	3.7	42.3	100.0	53.0	6.9	8.6	31.5
May.....	100.0	53.4	3.6	43.0	100.0	52.5	7.1	8.5	31.9
June.....	100.0	52.3	3.4	44.3	100.0	51.2	7.3	8.9	32.6
July.....	100.0	28.5	6.2	65.3	100.0	25.6	8.1	16.8	49.5
August.....	100.0	28.5	5.5	65.0	100.0	25.5	8.4	16.2	49.9
September.....	100.0	28.5	5.0	66.5	100.0	25.2	8.7	15.8	50.3
October.....	100.0	29.5	4.3	66.2	100.0	25.8	8.9	14.0	51.3
November.....	100.0	29.4	4.1	66.5	100.0	25.4	9.2	13.2	52.2
December.....	100.0	29.2	3.9	66.9	100.0	25.2	9.5	12.6	52.7

*Less than 0.05 percent.

Table 1.—Activities of Labor-Market Entrants of the 1929 Eighth-Grade Graduating Class, by Month, January 1, 1929—July 1, 1938, and by Sex—Continued

Year and month	Male				Female				
	Total	Youth in school	Others not seeking work	Youth in labor market	Total	Youth in school	Housewives	Others not seeking work	Youth in labor market
<i>Percent distribution</i>									
1934									
January.....	100.0	27.7	4.4	67.9	100.0	23.9	10.1	13.2	62.8
February.....	100.0	24.3	4.5	71.2	100.0	22.2	10.6	13.1	64.1
March.....	100.0	23.7	4.3	72.0	100.0	21.6	10.6	12.9	64.9
April.....	100.0	23.2	4.2	72.6	100.0	21.2	11.0	12.5	65.3
May.....	100.0	22.8	4.1	73.1	100.0	20.6	11.4	12.1	65.9
June.....	100.0	21.8	4.1	74.1	100.0	19.8	11.7	12.1	66.4
July.....	100.0	18.4	4.4	80.2	100.0	14.6	11.9	12.9	60.6
August.....	100.0	15.3	4.3	80.4	100.0	14.4	12.2	12.6	60.8
September.....	100.0	15.3	4.0	80.7	100.0	14.0	12.4	12.0	61.6
October.....	100.0	17.8	3.4	78.8	100.0	15.3	12.7	10.2	61.8
November.....	100.0	18.3	3.3	78.4	100.0	15.4	12.9	9.4	62.3
December.....	100.0	18.1	3.4	78.5	100.0	15.1	13.2	9.0	62.7
1935									
January.....	100.0	17.6	3.6	78.8	100.0	14.2	13.8	9.1	62.9
February.....	100.0	17.3	3.1	79.6	100.0	14.0	14.2	9.0	62.8
March.....	100.0	17.0	3.0	80.0	100.0	13.9	14.2	8.9	63.0
April.....	100.0	16.6	2.9	80.5	100.0	13.3	14.6	8.8	63.3
May.....	100.0	16.2	2.6	81.2	100.0	13.0	14.9	8.4	63.7
June.....	100.0	15.4	2.5	82.1	100.0	12.3	15.2	8.5	64.0
July.....	100.0	12.1	2.7	85.2	100.0	10.3	15.6	8.8	65.3
August.....	100.0	12.1	2.7	85.2	100.0	10.0	15.9	8.5	65.6
September.....	100.0	12.0	2.9	85.1	100.0	9.8	16.6	8.3	65.3
October.....	100.0	13.1	2.8	84.1	100.0	10.2	17.2	7.5	65.1
November.....	100.0	13.5	2.8	83.7	100.0	10.1	17.5	7.3	65.1
December.....	100.0	13.5	2.9	83.6	100.0	9.9	17.7	6.9	65.5
1936									
January.....	100.0	12.7	3.1	84.2	100.0	9.4	18.2	7.2	65.2
February.....	100.0	12.8	2.7	84.5	100.0	9.7	18.7	6.8	64.8
March.....	100.0	12.8	2.4	84.8	100.0	9.6	18.9	6.8	64.7
April.....	100.0	12.3	2.3	85.4	100.0	9.7	19.4	6.3	64.6
May.....	100.0	12.1	2.4	85.5	100.0	9.4	19.6	6.1	64.9
June.....	100.0	11.7	2.4	85.9	100.0	9.0	20.1	6.3	64.6
July.....	100.0	9.7	2.4	87.9	100.0	7.4	20.9	6.9	64.8
August.....	100.0	9.6	2.4	88.0	100.0	7.3	21.4	7.0	64.3
September.....	100.0	9.5	2.4	88.1	100.0	7.0	22.0	6.9	64.1
October.....	100.0	10.9	2.0	87.1	100.0	7.4	22.2	5.9	64.5
November.....	100.0	11.3	2.0	86.7	100.0	7.3	22.2	5.4	65.1
December.....	100.0	11.1	1.8	87.1	100.0	7.2	22.1	5.0	65.7
1937									
January.....	100.0	10.7	2.1	87.2	100.0	7.1	23.0	5.4	64.5
February.....	100.0	10.8	2.0	87.2	100.0	7.0	23.5	5.2	64.3
March.....	100.0	10.7	2.0	87.3	100.0	7.0	23.7	5.4	63.9
April.....	100.0	10.3	1.7	88.0	100.0	6.9	24.1	5.5	63.5
May.....	100.0	10.1	1.7	88.2	100.0	6.7	24.5	5.3	63.5
June.....	100.0	9.4	1.7	88.9	100.0	6.2	24.8	5.6	63.4
July.....	100.0	6.0	2.4	91.6	100.0	3.7	25.4	6.6	64.3
August.....	100.0	5.9	2.4	91.7	100.0	3.5	25.6	6.8	64.1
September.....	100.0	5.8	2.6	91.6	100.0	2.9	26.1	6.9	64.1
October.....	100.0	6.4	2.1	91.5	100.0	3.0	26.1	5.4	65.5
November.....	100.0	6.8	1.9	91.3	100.0	2.8	26.4	5.1	65.7
December.....	100.0	6.7	2.2	91.1	100.0	2.8	26.7	4.9	65.6
1938									
January.....	100.0	6.2	2.5	91.3	100.0	2.4	27.6	4.9	65.1
February.....	100.0	6.5	2.1	91.4	100.0	2.3	28.3	5.0	64.4
March.....	100.0	6.4	2.2	91.4	100.0	2.3	28.8	5.1	63.8
April.....	100.0	6.1	2.2	91.7	100.0	2.3	28.9	4.7	61.1
May.....	100.0	6.1	2.2	91.7	100.0	2.1	29.0	5.0	63.9
June.....	100.0	5.7	2.1	92.2	100.0	1.9	29.1	5.5	63.5
July.....	100.0	4.0	2.4	93.6	100.0	1.6	29.6	5.9	62.9

Table 2.—Employment Status of Labor-Market Entrants of the 1929 Eighth-Grade Graduating Class, by Month, January 1, 1929—January 1, 1938, and by Sex

Year and month	Male					Female				
	Total in labor market	Em- ployed (full time) ¹	Em- ployed (part time) ²	Work pro- grams ³	Seeking work	Total in labor market	Em- ployed (full time) ¹	Em- ployed (part time) ²	Work pro- grams ³	Seeking work
<i>Percent distribution</i>										
1929										
January	100.0	59.4	9.4	—	31.2	100.0	53.8	—	—	46.2
February	100.0	67.0	4.6	—	28.4	100.0	42.0	5.8	—	52.2
March	100.0	76.7	4.2	—	19.1	100.0	48.4	3.2	—	48.4
April	100.0	82.7	4.7	—	12.6	100.0	60.8	3.3	—	35.9
May	100.0	81.6	4.6	—	13.8	100.0	67.0	3.1	—	29.9
June	100.0	82.1	6.6	—	11.3	100.0	65.4	2.8	—	31.8
July	100.0	69.4	5.7	—	24.9	100.0	51.0	4.3	—	44.7
August	100.0	74.3	5.8	—	19.9	100.0	58.9	4.8	—	36.3
September	100.0	78.5	5.3	—	16.2	100.0	66.9	4.3	—	28.8
October	100.0	83.7	5.1	—	11.2	100.0	73.8	5.1	—	21.1
November	100.0	85.7	4.3	—	10.0	100.0	73.6	5.7	—	20.7
December	100.0	83.7	4.0	—	12.3	100.0	73.9	6.4	—	19.7
1930										
January	100.0	80.6	4.8	—	14.6	100.0	73.4	6.9	—	19.7
February	100.0	81.7	4.9	—	13.4	100.0	71.8	7.6	—	20.6
March	100.0	81.8	5.1	—	13.1	100.0	74.4	7.0	—	18.6
April	100.0	82.6	5.3	—	12.1	100.0	79.5	7.2	—	16.3
May	100.0	82.1	5.7	—	12.2	100.0	77.7	6.6	—	15.7
June	100.0	82.8	6.2	—	11.0	100.0	78.5	6.1	—	15.4
July	100.0	80.3	6.9	—	12.8	100.0	72.8	5.5	—	21.7
August	100.0	81.1	6.9	—	12.0	100.0	75.5	5.8	—	18.7
September	100.0	81.4	6.4	—	12.2	100.0	75.8	6.1	—	18.1
October	100.0	82.5	5.9	—	11.6	100.0	75.7	6.2	—	18.1
November	100.0	82.0	5.8	—	12.2	100.0	77.1	6.0	—	16.9
December	100.0	80.6	7.2	—	12.2	100.0	76.8	6.3	—	16.9
1931										
January	100.0	78.6	7.1	—	14.3	100.0	76.3	6.5	—	17.2
February	100.0	77.3	7.6	—	15.1	100.0	75.8	7.2	—	17.0
March	100.0	78.1	7.9	—	14.0	100.0	76.1	7.2	—	16.7
April	100.0	79.1	7.8	—	13.1	100.0	74.6	8.0	—	17.4
May	100.0	80.1	7.2	—	12.7	100.0	74.2	8.3	—	17.5
June	100.0	80.2	7.9	—	11.9	100.0	74.7	8.7	—	16.6
July	100.0	77.2	8.1	—	14.7	100.0	72.2	8.4	0.1	19.3
August	100.0	79.2	8.1	—	12.7	100.0	72.2	8.4	0.1	19.3
September	100.0	78.4	8.2	—	13.4	100.0	73.9	8.3	0.2	17.6
October	100.0	78.2	8.0	—	13.8	100.0	75.6	8.5	0.2	15.7
November	100.0	77.8	8.2	0.2	13.8	100.0	74.1	9.1	0.2	16.6
December	100.0	77.2	8.0	0.3	14.5	100.0	74.1	9.7	0.2	16.0
1932										
January	100.0	75.2	8.6	0.3	15.9	100.0	72.7	9.6	0.2	17.5
February	100.0	75.4	8.5	0.3	15.8	100.0	71.6	9.6	0.2	18.6
March	100.0	76.0	9.0	0.2	14.8	100.0	73.0	9.3	0.2	17.5
April	100.0	75.4	8.7	0.1	15.8	100.0	73.4	9.1	0.2	17.3
May	100.0	76.4	8.4	0.1	15.1	100.0	72.7	9.4	0.2	17.7
June	100.0	76.7	8.4	0.2	14.7	100.0	72.5	9.4	0.2	17.9
July	100.0	73.8	9.4	0.2	16.6	100.0	68.1	9.2	0.3	22.4
August	100.0	74.6	9.8	0.3	15.3	100.0	69.6	8.8	0.3	21.3
September	100.0	74.5	10.2	0.3	15.0	100.0	70.9	9.1	0.3	19.7
October	100.0	73.6	9.9	0.4	16.1	100.0	72.4	8.7	0.2	18.7
November	100.0	73.2	10.0	0.3	16.5	100.0	72.3	8.9	0.2	18.6
December	100.0	72.6	10.5	0.5	16.4	100.0	72.0	8.8	0.2	19.0
1933										
January	100.0	69.4	10.5	0.5	19.6	100.0	69.4	9.6	0.3	20.7
February	100.0	66.9	11.3	0.6	21.2	100.0	65.5	10.2	0.3	24.0
March	100.0	67.5	11.2	0.4	20.9	100.0	66.3	10.4	0.5	22.8
April	100.0	68.5	11.3	0.5	19.7	100.0	66.6	10.6	0.5	22.3
May	100.0	69.4	10.7	2.5	17.4	100.0	65.9	10.5	0.4	22.2
June	100.0	68.5	10.7	4.6	16.2	100.0	67.4	10.7	0.4	21.5
July	100.0	62.6	11.2	4.1	22.1	100.0	55.4	10.9	0.3	33.4
August	100.0	64.4	11.1	4.3	20.2	100.0	58.8	10.9	0.3	30.0
September	100.0	66.4	10.6	4.3	18.7	100.0	61.1	11.1	0.3	27.5
October	100.0	67.5	10.0	3.9	18.6	100.0	63.4	11.4	0.3	24.9
November	100.0	66.7	10.4	4.3	18.6	100.0	63.6	11.7	0.3	24.4
December	100.0	63.8	10.1	5.2	17.9	100.0	64.9	11.6	0.8	22.7

See footnotes at end of table.

Table 2.—Employment Status of Labor-Market Entrants of the 1929 Eighth-Grade Graduating Class, by Month, January 1, 1929—January 1, 1938, and by Sex—Con.

Year and month	Male					Female				
	Total in labor market	Em- ployed full time ¹	Em- ployed part time ²	Work pro- grams ³	Seeking work	Total in labor market	Em- ployed full time ¹	Em- ployed part time ²	Work pro- grams ³	Seeking work
<i>Percent distribution</i>										
1934										
January	100.0	66.6	9.9	5.7	17.8	100.0	64.4	11.7	0.9	23.0
February	100.0	66.1	10.1	5.5	18.3	100.0	64.4	11.7	0.8	23.1
March	100.0	67.4	10.0	5.2	17.4	100.0	66.2	11.4	0.8	21.6
April	100.0	69.0	9.8	4.4	17.0	100.0	67.6	11.2	0.8	20.4
May	100.0	70.7	9.3	4.1	15.9	100.0	68.8	11.0	0.7	19.5
June	100.0	72.1	9.1	3.9	14.9	100.0	69.8	10.6	0.6	19.0
July	100.0	71.8	9.1	3.5	15.6	100.0	68.2	10.9	0.7	20.2
August	100.0	72.3	8.6	4.0	15.1	100.0	69.5	11.0	0.7	18.8
September	100.0	72.9	8.2	4.2	14.7	100.0	69.7	10.7	0.7	18.9
October	100.0	74.1	7.6	4.2	14.1	100.0	71.3	10.3	0.8	17.6
November	100.0	74.2	7.6	4.4	13.8	100.0	72.1	10.2	1.0	16.7
December	100.0	73.8	8.0	4.5	13.7	100.0	72.2	10.2	1.0	16.6
1935										
January	100.0	73.2	8.0	4.3	14.5	100.0	71.4	10.1	1.1	17.4
February	100.0	73.3	8.0	4.5	14.2	100.0	70.9	10.4	1.0	17.7
March	100.0	74.4	8.1	4.3	13.2	100.0	72.4	10.3	0.9	16.4
April	100.0	75.8	7.8	4.0	12.4	100.0	73.3	10.4	1.1	15.2
May	100.0	77.4	7.2	4.6	10.8	100.0	73.8	10.5	1.1	14.6
June	100.0	77.5	6.8	4.4	10.3	100.0	74.4	10.4	1.1	14.1
July	100.0	78.8	6.7	4.1	10.4	100.0	74.0	10.1	1.1	14.8
August	100.0	78.9	6.8	4.0	10.3	100.0	75.0	10.4	1.1	13.5
September	100.0	79.2	6.8	4.0	10.0	100.0	75.2	10.2	1.1	13.5
October	100.0	79.7	6.4	3.9	10.0	100.0	76.9	9.7	0.9	12.5
November	100.0	79.6	6.4	3.5	10.5	100.0	76.8	9.9	1.1	12.2
December	100.0	79.0	6.6	4.0	10.4	100.0	77.7	9.4	1.7	11.2
1936										
January	100.0	77.8	6.7	4.0	11.5	100.0	77.0	9.7	1.8	11.5
February	100.0	79.1	6.2	4.1	10.6	100.0	76.7	9.8	2.2	11.3
March	100.0	80.4	5.7	4.0	9.9	100.0	77.5	9.6	2.4	10.5
April	100.0	81.6	5.7	4.0	8.7	100.0	78.2	9.4	2.7	9.7
May	100.0	83.4	5.4	3.4	7.8	100.0	79.1	8.9	2.7	9.3
June	100.0	84.6	5.2	3.3	6.9	100.0	79.6	8.5	2.8	9.1
July	100.0	85.1	5.3	3.3	6.3	100.0	79.8	8.3	2.8	9.1
August	100.0	85.9	5.1	3.2	5.8	100.0	81.2	8.0	2.7	8.1
September	100.0	85.9	4.9	3.1	6.1	100.0	81.3	7.9	2.5	8.3
October	100.0	86.3	4.6	3.0	6.1	100.0	81.8	8.2	2.6	7.4
November	100.0	86.0	4.7	2.7	6.6	100.0	82.7	7.8	2.6	6.9
December	100.0	85.8	4.8	2.6	6.8	100.0	83.2	7.4	2.7	6.7
1937										
January	100.0	85.2	4.8	2.5	7.5	100.0	82.6	7.0	2.6	7.8
February	100.0	85.6	4.8	2.4	7.2	100.0	82.6	7.1	2.6	7.7
March	100.0	86.8	4.7	2.3	6.2	100.0	82.9	7.4	2.5	7.2
April	100.0	87.9	4.8	2.1	5.2	100.0	83.7	7.3	2.3	6.7
May	100.0	88.5	4.7	2.0	4.8	100.0	83.4	7.3	2.3	7.0
June	100.0	89.1	4.5	1.8	4.6	100.0	83.0	7.6	2.4	7.0
July	100.0	88.8	4.5	1.5	5.2	100.0	82.8	7.5	2.0	7.7
August	100.0	88.6	4.5	1.5	5.4	100.0	83.2	7.1	1.9	7.8
September	100.0	88.2	4.5	1.4	5.9	100.0	83.4	7.2	1.9	7.5
October	100.0	87.6	4.6	1.4	6.4	100.0	83.9	7.2	1.8	6.6
November	100.0	86.8	4.9	1.6	6.7	100.0	83.5	7.9	1.9	6.7
December	100.0	84.4	5.2	1.6	8.8	100.0	83.6	7.5	1.9	7.0
1938										
January	100.0	81.9	5.4	1.6	11.1	100.0	82.4	7.6	2.1	7.9
February	100.0	80.9	5.6	2.1	11.4	100.0	80.6	8.2	2.2	9.0
March	100.0	80.9	5.8	2.4	10.9	100.0	81.0	8.5	2.2	8.3
April	100.0	81.4	5.6	2.8	10.2	100.0	80.8	8.6	2.3	8.3
May	100.0	80.9	5.8	2.9	10.4	100.0	79.6	9.5	2.3	8.6
June	100.0	80.8	5.7	3.1	10.4	100.0	79.2	9.5	2.4	8.9
July	100.0	80.8	5.6	3.1	10.5	100.0	78.1	9.5	2.5	9.9

¹ 30 hours or more per week.

² Less than 30 hours per week.

³ Includes Federal, State, and local emergency work-relief employment.

Table 3.—Activities of Labor-Market Entrants of the 1931 Eighth-Grade Graduating Class, by Month, January 1, 1931–July 1, 1938, and by Sex

Year and month	Male				Female				
	Total	Youth in school	Others not seeking work	Youth in labor market	Total	Youth in school	Housewives	Others not seeking work	Youth in labor market
<i>Percent distribution</i>									
1931									
January	100.0	99.9	*	0.1	100.0	99.9	*	0.1	*
February	100.0	98.1	0.4	1.5	100.0	97.5	0.2	1.0	1.3
March	100.0	98.0	0.4	1.6	100.0	97.3	0.2	1.1	1.4
April	100.0	97.8	0.4	1.8	100.0	97.2	0.2	1.0	1.5
May	100.0	97.6	0.5	1.9	100.0	97.1	0.2	1.1	1.6
June	100.0	97.0	0.6	2.4	100.0	96.4	0.2	1.4	2.0
July	100.0	92.0	1.5	6.5	100.0	89.4	0.6	3.9	6.1
August	100.0	92.0	1.4	6.6	100.0	89.3	0.6	3.8	6.3
September	100.0	92.0	1.3	6.7	100.0	89.3	0.6	3.7	6.4
October	100.0	91.9	1.2	6.9	100.0	89.2	0.7	3.5	6.6
November	100.0	91.7	1.3	7.0	100.0	89.0	0.7	3.6	6.7
December	100.0	91.4	1.2	7.4	100.0	88.7	0.7	3.7	6.9
1932									
January	100.0	91.0	1.3	7.7	100.0	88.2	0.8	4.0	7.0
February	100.0	89.9	1.4	8.7	100.0	87.2	0.9	4.1	7.8
March	100.0	89.5	1.5	9.0	100.0	86.9	0.9	4.2	8.0
April	100.0	89.1	1.5	9.4	100.0	86.6	1.0	4.2	8.2
May	100.0	88.8	1.5	9.7	100.0	86.4	1.0	4.4	8.2
June	100.0	88.5	1.5	10.0	100.0	86.0	1.0	4.4	8.6
July	100.0	84.7	2.1	13.2	100.0	82.8	1.2	5.3	10.7
August	100.0	84.7	2.1	13.2	100.0	82.8	1.2	5.3	10.7
September	100.0	84.7	2.1	13.2	100.0	82.8	1.3	5.2	10.7
October	100.0	84.9	1.9	13.2	100.0	83.1	1.3	4.7	10.9
November	100.0	84.6	2.0	13.4	100.0	82.8	1.5	4.7	11.0
December	100.0	84.1	2.0	13.9	100.0	82.6	1.6	4.7	11.1
1933									
January	100.0	83.2	2.2	14.6	100.0	82.1	1.7	4.9	11.3
February	100.0	81.4	2.6	16.0	100.0	80.8	1.7	5.2	12.3
March	100.0	80.9	2.6	16.5	100.0	80.5	1.8	5.2	12.5
April	100.0	80.5	2.6	16.9	100.0	80.1	1.9	5.1	12.9
May	100.0	79.9	2.5	17.6	100.0	79.6	1.9	5.2	13.3
June	100.0	79.1	2.5	18.4	100.0	79.3	1.9	5.3	13.5
July	100.0	73.3	3.2	23.5	100.0	74.0	2.4	6.6	17.0
August	100.0	73.2	3.2	23.6	100.0	73.9	2.6	6.3	17.2
September	100.0	73.2	3.1	23.7	100.0	73.9	2.7	6.1	17.3
October	100.0	73.6	2.6	23.8	100.0	73.9	2.9	5.7	17.5
November	100.0	73.2	2.5	24.3	100.0	73.5	3.1	5.9	17.5
December	100.0	72.8	2.4	24.8	100.0	73.0	3.3	5.8	17.9
1934									
January	100.0	71.8	2.6	25.6	100.0	72.3	3.4	5.9	18.4
February	100.0	70.1	2.6	27.3	100.0	71.1	3.7	6.2	19.0
March	100.0	69.5	2.7	27.8	100.0	70.7	3.9	6.2	19.2
April	100.0	68.7	2.9	28.4	100.0	70.3	4.0	6.2	19.5
May	100.0	67.8	2.5	29.7	100.0	69.8	4.3	6.3	19.6
June	100.0	67.0	2.5	30.5	100.0	69.2	4.4	6.4	20.0
July	100.0	60.9	3.3	35.8	100.0	62.7	4.9	8.2	24.2
August	100.0	60.9	3.0	36.1	100.0	62.6	5.1	7.9	24.4
September	100.0	60.9	3.0	36.1	100.0	62.5	5.3	7.6	24.6
October	100.0	61.4	2.5	36.1	100.0	62.5	5.6	7.0	24.9
November	100.0	60.8	2.4	36.8	100.0	62.1	5.8	6.8	25.3
December	100.0	60.3	2.5	37.2	100.0	61.7	5.9	6.6	25.8
1935									
January	100.0	57.1	3.3	39.6	100.0	58.8	6.2	7.4	27.6
February	100.0	52.2	3.5	44.3	100.0	53.7	6.5	9.0	30.8
March	100.0	51.2	3.2	45.6	100.0	53.0	6.7	9.0	31.3
April	100.0	50.4	3.1	46.5	100.0	52.5	6.8	8.9	31.8
May	100.0	49.6	2.9	47.5	100.0	51.8	7.1	9.0	32.1
June	100.0	48.0	2.6	49.4	100.0	49.8	7.4	9.1	33.7
July	100.0	23.2	5.8	71.0	100.0	24.5	8.3	16.6	50.6
August	100.0	23.1	5.4	71.5	100.0	24.2	8.5	16.0	51.3
September	100.0	23.3	4.7	72.0	100.0	24.1	8.7	15.0	52.3
October	100.0	24.2	3.9	71.9	100.0	24.1	9.0	12.3	54.6
November	100.0	23.8	3.8	72.4	100.0	23.7	9.3	11.4	55.6
December	100.0	23.2	3.7	73.1	100.0	23.3	9.3	10.7	56.7

* Less than 0.05 percent.

Table 3.—Activities of Labor-Market Entrants of the 1931 Eighth-Grade Graduating Class, by Month, January 1, 1931–July 1, 1938, and by Sex—Continued

Year and month	Male				Female				
	Total	Youth in school	Others not seeking work	Youth in labor market	Total	Youth in school	Housewives	Others not seeking work	Youth in labor market
<i>Percent distribution</i>									
1936									
January	100.0	22.0	4.2	73.8	100.0	21.9	10.1	11.1	56.9
February	100.0	19.2	3.9	76.9	100.0	19.6	10.4	11.1	58.9
March	100.0	18.7	3.5	77.8	100.0	19.3	10.6	10.5	59.6
April	100.0	18.1	3.1	78.8	100.0	18.5	10.5	9.8	61.2
May	100.0	17.7	3.0	79.3	100.0	17.2	10.8	9.3	62.7
June	100.0	16.7	3.0	80.3	100.0	15.5	11.1	9.4	64.0
July	100.0	9.7	3.5	86.8	100.0	10.5	11.5	10.6	67.4
August	100.0	9.7	3.6	86.7	100.0	10.1	11.9	10.3	67.7
September	100.0	9.7	3.3	87.0	100.0	9.5	12.3	9.8	68.4
October	100.0	11.6	2.8	85.6	100.0	10.0	12.5	7.9	69.6
November	100.0	12.0	2.4	85.6	100.0	9.7	12.8	7.4	70.1
December	100.0	12.0	2.6	85.4	100.0	9.3	13.2	6.8	70.7
1937									
January	100.0	11.2	2.9	85.9	100.0	8.7	13.8	7.3	70.2
February	100.0	10.4	2.8	86.8	100.0	8.6	14.5	6.9	70.0
March	100.0	10.3	2.5	87.2	100.0	8.4	14.8	6.6	70.2
April	100.0	9.5	2.4	88.1	100.0	8.2	15.1	6.3	70.4
May	100.0	9.0	2.3	88.7	100.0	8.0	15.5	6.3	70.2
June	100.0	8.7	2.3	89.0	100.0	7.2	16.0	6.1	70.7
July	100.0	5.3	2.4	92.3	100.0	4.5	16.3	7.2	72.0
August	100.0	5.2	2.5	92.3	100.0	4.3	16.7	7.3	71.7
September	100.0	5.4	2.3	92.3	100.0	4.0	16.8	7.3	71.9
October	100.0	6.4	2.3	91.3	100.0	4.3	17.4	6.0	72.3
November	100.0	6.8	2.2	91.0	100.0	4.3	18.0	6.1	71.6
December	100.0	6.7	2.7	90.6	100.0	4.2	18.3	5.9	71.6
1938									
January	100.0	6.2	3.4	90.4	100.0	3.8	19.0	6.0	71.2
February	100.0	6.7	3.1	90.2	100.0	3.9	19.5	6.0	70.6
March	100.0	6.3	3.3	90.4	100.0	3.9	19.9	5.8	70.4
April	100.0	6.1	3.0	90.9	100.0	3.7	20.2	5.7	70.4
May	100.0	5.9	2.8	91.3	100.0	3.4	20.2	5.8	70.6
June	100.0	5.7	2.4	91.9	100.0	3.1	20.9	5.7	70.3
July	100.0	4.5	2.6	92.9	100.0	2.1	21.6	6.2	70.1

Table 4.—Employment Status of Labor-Market Entrants of the 1931 Eighth-Grade Graduating Class, by Month, January 1, 1931–July 1, 1938, and by Sex

Year and month	Male					Female				
	Total in labor market	Em- ployed (full time) ¹	Em- ployed part time ²	Work pro- grams ³	Seeking work	Total in labor market	Em- ployed (full time) ¹	Em- ployed part time ²	Work pro- grams ³	Seeking work
<i>Percent distribution</i>										
1931	†	†	†	†	†	†	†	†	†	†
January	100.0	51.5	9.4	—	39.1	100.0	27.1	6.8	—	66.1
February	100.0	56.5	10.1	—	33.4	100.0	39.7	9.5	—	50.8
March	100.0	58.4	9.2	—	22.4	100.0	50.0	10.6	—	39.4
April	100.0	70.9	8.9	—	20.2	100.0	47.9	9.6	—	42.5
May	100.0	65.0	9.1	—	25.3	100.0	48.3	9.2	—	42.5
June	100.0	53.1	8.4	—	38.5	100.0	39.3	9.3	—	51.4
July	100.0	55.9	9.4	—	34.7	100.0	42.6	10.5	—	40.9
August	100.0	57.3	10.3	—	32.4	100.0	45.8	10.6	—	43.6
September	100.0	64.0	11.1	—	24.9	100.0	52.9	9.2	—	37.9
October	100.0	64.2	11.1	—	24.7	100.0	54.2	9.4	—	36.4
November	100.0	63.5	11.2	—	25.3	100.0	56.7	8.8	—	34.5
December	100.0	63.5	11.2	—	25.3	100.0	56.7	8.8	—	34.5
1932										
January	100.0	62.7	10.8	—	26.5	100.0	56.4	8.9	—	34.7
February	100.0	60.6	11.2	—	28.2	100.0	53.6	8.7	—	37.7
March	100.0	61.8	10.9	—	27.3	100.0	54.8	8.8	—	36.4
April	100.0	63.0	10.9	—	26.1	100.0	52.6	9.6	—	37.8
May	100.0	63.7	11.5	—	24.8	100.0	51.5	9.6	—	38.0
June	100.0	63.7	11.1	—	25.2	100.0	52.9	9.8	—	37.3
July	100.0	63.1	12.5	0.5	23.9	100.0	51.6	10.6	—	37.8
August	100.0	65.0	12.5	0.7	21.8	100.0	54.1	10.2	—	35.7
September	100.0	65.0	12.9	0.7	21.4	100.0	53.8	10.3	—	35.9
October	100.0	64.3	12.6	0.7	22.4	100.0	55.6	10.1	—	34.3
November	100.0	63.1	12.4	0.9	23.6	100.0	58.8	10.3	—	30.9
December	100.0	63.0	11.9	0.9	24.2	100.0	58.1	10.3	—	31.6
1933										
January	100.0	62.4	12.5	1.0	24.1	100.0	57.3	11.0	—	31.7
February	100.0	62.9	11.4	1.0	24.7	100.0	56.0	10.5	—	33.5
March	100.0	62.8	12.4	1.3	23.5	100.0	56.7	10.3	—	33.0
April	100.0	63.9	12.0	1.1	23.0	100.0	58.7	10.5	—	30.8
May	100.0	65.1	11.2	3.5	20.2	100.0	59.8	10.0	0.2	30.0
June	100.0	64.6	11.1	5.0	19.3	100.0	59.9	10.4	0.2	29.5
July	100.0	62.4	10.2	5.4	22.0	100.0	56.4	10.8	0.1	32.7
August	100.0	63.1	10.4	5.3	21.2	100.0	58.9	10.2	0.1	30.8
September	100.0	64.0	10.2	5.4	20.4	100.0	61.5	10.1	0.1	28.3
October	100.0	64.8	9.8	5.5	19.9	100.0	62.8	10.1	0.1	27.0
November	100.0	62.3	10.2	6.7	20.8	100.0	61.6	10.2	0.1	28.1
December	100.0	62.0	10.1	7.0	20.9	100.0	62.5	10.4	0.1	27.0
1934										
January	100.0	61.5	10.2	7.3	21.0	100.0	60.4	10.9	0.1	28.6
February	100.0	61.5	9.7	7.3	21.5	100.0	59.7	11.4	0.5	28.4
March	100.0	62.8	9.4	7.3	20.5	100.0	61.7	11.3	0.5	26.5
April	100.0	64.5	9.2	6.2	20.1	100.0	63.9	11.1	0.5	24.5
May	100.0	64.9	9.4	6.5	19.2	100.0	64.9	10.9	0.4	23.8
June	100.0	65.7	9.4	6.6	18.3	100.0	65.8	11.3	0.3	22.6
July	100.0	65.8	9.8	5.6	18.8	100.0	62.7	10.7	0.4	26.2
August	100.0	66.8	9.7	7.0	16.5	100.0	63.2	10.8	0.5	25.5
September	100.0	67.6	9.5	6.8	16.1	100.0	64.6	11.1	0.4	23.9
October	100.0	67.8	9.1	7.0	16.1	100.0	66.2	10.5	0.5	22.8
November	100.0	66.6	9.2	7.2	17.0	100.0	66.2	11.4	0.5	21.9
December	100.0	66.5	8.8	7.4	17.3	100.0	67.4	11.5	0.4	20.7
1935										
January	100.0	64.5	9.3	6.7	19.5	100.0	61.7	12.0	0.4	25.9
February	100.0	62.6	9.5	7.0	20.9	100.0	58.1	11.7	0.4	29.8
March	100.0	63.9	9.6	6.8	19.7	100.0	60.4	11.8	0.6	27.2
April	100.0	66.7	9.5	6.4	17.4	100.0	64.0	11.8	0.6	23.6
May	100.0	67.7	8.6	7.8	15.9	100.0	65.1	12.1	0.6	22.2
June	100.0	67.9	8.3	7.4	16.4	100.0	64.6	11.1	0.7	23.6
July	100.0	63.6	9.0	5.6	21.8	100.0	54.2	11.5	0.6	33.7
August	100.0	69.3	8.9	5.6	19.2	100.0	57.9	11.6	0.9	29.6
September	100.0	68.2	8.4	5.6	17.8	100.0	61.2	11.5	0.9	26.4
October	100.0	71.2	7.9	5.6	15.3	100.0	62.8	11.3	1.2	24.7
November	100.0	72.3	7.8	4.8	15.1	100.0	64.5	11.5	1.3	22.7
December	100.0	71.8	8.1	5.1	15.0	100.0	65.5	11.4	1.5	20.6

See footnotes at end of table.

Table 4.—Employment Status of Labor-Market Entrants of the 1931 Eighth-Grade Graduating Class, by Month, January 1, 1931—July 1, 1938, and by Sex—Continued

Year and month	Male					Female				
	Total in labor market	Em- ployed full time †	Em- ployed part time ‡	Work pro- grams †	Seeking work	Total in labor market	Em- ployed full time †	Em- ployed part time ‡	Work pro- grams †	Seeking work
<i>Percent distribution</i>										
1936										
January.....	100.0	70.3	8.4	5.1	16.2	100.0	65.6	11.2	1.9	21.3
February.....	100.0	69.8	8.4	5.1	16.7	100.0	63.7	10.7	2.6	23.0
March.....	100.0	71.1	8.1	5.2	15.6	100.0	65.3	10.4	3.1	21.2
April.....	100.0	74.2	7.7	4.8	13.3	100.0	67.4	10.1	3.5	19.0
May.....	100.0	76.8	7.0	4.7	11.5	100.0	69.1	10.1	3.5	17.3
June.....	100.0	78.7	6.5	4.6	10.2	100.0	70.7	9.7	3.3	16.3
July.....	100.0	78.7	6.3	4.1	10.9	100.0	70.9	9.1	3.1	16.9
August.....	100.0	79.6	6.0	4.2	10.2	100.0	71.4	9.5	3.0	16.1
September.....	100.0	80.0	5.8	4.2	10.0	100.0	74.2	8.8	2.9	14.1
October.....	100.0	80.7	5.5	3.8	10.0	100.0	76.3	8.5	3.0	12.2
November.....	100.0	80.9	5.0	3.8	10.3	100.0	76.6	8.6	2.9	11.9
December.....	100.0	80.9	4.9	3.6	10.6	100.0	77.7	8.2	3.1	11.0
1937										
January.....	100.0	79.6	5.0	3.5	11.9	100.0	76.9	7.9	3.1	12.1
February.....	100.0	80.8	4.9	3.5	10.8	100.0	75.7	8.6	3.0	12.7
March.....	100.0	82.6	4.9	3.2	9.3	100.0	76.7	8.4	3.0	11.9
April.....	100.0	83.5	4.9	2.8	8.8	100.0	77.9	8.6	2.9	10.6
May.....	100.0	84.8	5.0	2.5	7.7	100.0	78.6	8.4	2.8	10.2
June.....	100.0	86.0	5.0	2.5	6.5	100.0	79.3	8.2	2.6	9.9
July.....	100.0	85.3	4.9	2.2	7.6	100.0	79.0	7.8	2.3	10.9
August.....	100.0	86.2	4.7	2.0	7.1	100.0	79.7	7.9	2.0	10.4
September.....	100.0	85.8	4.7	2.0	7.5	100.0	80.1	7.8	2.0	10.1
October.....	100.0	84.9	4.7	1.9	8.5	100.0	80.7	7.6	2.2	9.5
November.....	100.0	83.4	4.9	2.2	9.5	100.0	80.8	7.4	2.1	9.7
December.....	100.0	81.5	5.2	2.2	11.1	100.0	81.0	7.2	2.0	9.8
1938										
January.....	100.0	77.7	5.5	2.4	14.4	100.0	79.3	7.4	2.0	11.3
February.....	100.0	76.8	5.8	2.6	14.8	100.0	78.4	7.7	2.0	11.9
March.....	100.0	76.7	5.6	2.8	14.9	100.0	78.6	7.7	2.1	11.6
April.....	100.0	76.8	5.6	3.3	14.3	100.0	79.0	7.9	2.1	11.0
May.....	100.0	76.6	6.0	3.6	13.8	100.0	78.3	8.3	2.0	11.4
June.....	100.0	76.5	6.0	3.7	13.8	100.0	78.6	7.9	2.0	11.5
July.....	100.0	76.2	6.0	3.8	14.0	100.0	77.9	7.5	2.0	12.6

†Percent not computed for fewer than 50 cases.

‡ 30 hours or more per week.

§ Less than 30 hours per week.

¶ Includes Federal, State, and local emergency work-relief employment.

Table 5.—Activities of Labor-Market Entrants of the 1933 Eighth-Grade Graduating Class, by Month, January 1, 1933–July 1, 1938, and by Sex

Year and month	Male				Female				
	Total	Youth in school	Others not seeking work	Youth in labor market	Total	Youth in school	Housewives	Others not seeking work	Youth in labor market
<i>Percent distribution</i>									
1933									
January	100.0	99.8	*	0.2	100.0	100.0	—	—	*
February	100.0	98.2	0.3	1.5	100.0	97.6	*	1.1	1.3
March	100.0	98.2	0.2	1.6	100.0	97.4	0.1	1.2	1.3
April	100.0	98.0	0.2	1.8	100.0	97.3	0.1	1.2	1.4
May	100.0	97.8	0.3	1.9	100.0	97.1	0.1	1.3	1.5
June	100.0	97.7	0.3	2.0	100.0	96.9	0.2	1.3	1.6
July	100.0	93.4	0.9	5.7	100.0	91.2	0.4	3.6	4.8
August	100.0	93.4	0.8	5.8	100.0	91.2	0.4	3.6	4.8
September	100.0	93.4	0.7	5.9	100.0	91.2	0.4	3.6	4.8
October	100.0	93.2	0.7	6.1	100.0	91.1	0.5	3.5	4.9
November	100.0	92.8	0.8	6.4	100.0	90.7	0.6	3.5	5.2
December	100.0	92.6	0.9	6.5	100.0	90.3	0.6	3.8	5.3
1934									
January	100.0	92.0	1.1	6.9	100.0	89.7	0.7	4.0	5.6
February	100.0	90.8	1.1	8.1	100.0	88.4	0.9	4.4	6.3
March	100.0	90.6	1.2	8.2	100.0	88.0	0.9	4.5	6.6
April	100.0	90.2	1.2	8.6	100.0	87.7	1.0	4.4	6.9
May	100.0	89.8	1.2	9.0	100.0	87.4	1.1	4.4	7.1
June	100.0	89.2	1.2	9.6	100.0	87.0	1.2	4.4	7.4
July	100.0	84.8	1.9	13.3	100.0	82.9	1.3	5.9	9.9
August	100.0	84.8	1.8	13.4	100.0	82.9	1.3	5.8	10.0
September	100.0	84.8	1.8	13.4	100.0	82.9	1.4	5.8	9.9
October	100.0	84.9	1.6	13.5	100.0	83.1	1.7	5.3	9.9
November	100.0	84.5	1.6	13.9	100.0	82.7	1.7	5.4	10.2
December	100.0	84.2	1.8	14.0	100.0	82.3	1.8	5.5	10.4
1935									
January	100.0	83.3	1.9	14.8	100.0	81.3	2.0	5.8	10.9
February	100.0	81.2	2.0	16.8	100.0	79.8	2.2	6.1	11.9
March	100.0	80.5	2.0	17.5	100.0	79.3	2.4	6.1	12.2
April	100.0	79.9	2.1	18.0	100.0	78.7	2.5	6.2	12.6
May	100.0	79.2	2.0	18.8	100.0	78.0	2.6	6.4	13.0
June	100.0	78.6	1.9	19.5	100.0	77.7	2.7	6.2	13.4
July	100.0	71.6	2.4	26.0	100.0	73.0	3.0	7.4	16.6
August	100.0	71.6	2.1	26.3	100.0	73.0	3.0	7.3	16.7
September	100.0	71.7	2.0	26.3	100.0	73.0	3.2	6.9	16.9
October	100.0	71.4	2.0	26.6	100.0	73.0	3.2	6.3	17.5
November	100.0	70.7	2.0	27.3	100.0	72.5	3.4	6.1	18.0
December	100.0	70.0	2.0	28.0	100.0	71.9	3.6	6.2	18.3

*Less than 0.05 percent.

Table 5.—Activities of Labor-Market Entrants of the 1933 Eighth-Grade Graduating Class, by Month, January 1, 1933–July 1, 1938, and by Sex—Continued

Year and month	Male				Female				
	Total	Youth in school	Others not seeking work	Youth in labor market	Total	Youth in school	House-wives	Others not seeking work	Youth in labor market
<i>Percent distribution</i>									
1936									
January.....	100.0	69.2	2.2	28.6	100.0	71.1	4.0	6.1	18.8
February.....	100.0	67.1	2.4	30.5	100.0	69.6	3.9	6.4	20.1
March.....	100.0	66.6	2.3	31.1	100.0	69.0	4.1	6.2	20.7
April.....	100.0	66.0	2.2	31.8	100.0	68.5	4.1	5.9	21.5
May.....	100.0	64.9	2.0	33.1	100.0	68.5	4.1	5.9	21.5
June.....	100.0	63.9	1.9	34.2	100.0	67.9	4.3	5.7	22.1
July.....	100.0	56.9	2.7	40.4	100.0	67.0	4.5	5.8	22.7
August.....	100.0	56.9	2.4	40.7	100.0	60.8	5.3	6.9	27.0
September.....	100.0	56.9	2.3	40.8	100.0	60.6	5.7	6.2	27.5
October.....	100.0	57.0	2.0	41.0	100.0	60.4	5.9	5.9	27.8
November.....	100.0	56.4	1.7	41.9	100.0	59.9	6.0	5.8	28.3
December.....	100.0	55.7	1.8	42.5	100.0	59.5	6.1	5.5	28.9
1937									
January.....	100.0	53.9	1.8	44.3	100.0	58.0	6.5	5.5	30.0
February.....	100.0	45.9	2.7	51.4	100.0	50.1	6.7	7.0	36.2
March.....	100.0	44.7	2.4	52.9	100.0	49.4	6.8	6.8	37.0
April.....	100.0	44.2	2.1	53.7	100.0	48.8	7.1	6.1	38.0
May.....	100.0	43.3	1.9	54.8	100.0	48.2	7.4	5.8	38.6
June.....	100.0	42.1	1.9	56.0	100.0	47.4	7.6	5.6	39.4
July.....	100.0	14.6	4.8	80.6	100.0	17.2	8.0	12.8	62.0
August.....	100.0	14.5	4.8	81.2	100.0	16.7	8.7	11.9	62.7
September.....	100.0	14.3	4.3	81.4	100.0	16.1	9.1	10.5	64.3
October.....	100.0	15.8	3.1	81.1	100.0	16.3	9.4	8.4	65.9
November.....	100.0	15.3	2.9	81.8	100.0	15.3	9.9	8.4	66.4
December.....	100.0	15.0	2.8	82.2	100.0	13.9	10.1	8.0	68.0
1938									
January.....	100.0	13.4	3.6	83.0	100.0	11.9	10.6	9.0	68.5
February.....	100.0	11.2	3.1	85.7	100.0	10.1	10.9	8.6	70.4
March.....	100.0	10.5	2.9	86.6	100.0	8.7	11.2	8.4	71.7
April.....	100.0	9.6	3.1	87.3	100.0	7.8	11.4	8.4	72.4
May.....	100.0	9.4	2.7	87.9	100.0	6.8	11.6	8.1	73.5
June.....	100.0	8.6	2.8	88.6	100.0	5.6	12.2	7.9	74.3
July.....	100.0	3.8	3.3	92.9	100.0	2.1	12.3	8.0	77.6

Table 6.—Employment Status of Labor-Market Entrants of the 1933 Eighth-Grade Graduating Class, by Month, January 1, 1933–July 1, 1938, and by Sex

Year and month	Male					Female				
	Total in labor market	Em- ployed full time ¹	Em- ployed part time ²	Work pro- grams ³	Seek- ing work	Total in labor market	Em- ployed full time ¹	Em- ployed part time ²	Work pro- grams ³	Seek- ing work
<i>Percent distribution</i>										
1933										
January.....	100.0	40.6	21.9	•	37.5	100.0	20.8	13.2	•	66.0
February.....	100.0	43.1	23.1	•	33.8	100.0	32.1	12.5	•	55.4
March.....	100.0	46.7	21.3	•	32.0	100.0	30.5	13.6	•	55.9
April.....	100.0	48.1	21.0	•	30.9	100.0	29.7	14.1	•	56.2
May.....	100.0	47.1	19.6	•	33.3	100.0	31.9	13.0	•	55.1
June.....	100.0	48.6	16.7	0.8	33.9	100.0	39.4	8.4	•	52.2
July.....	100.0	51.8	16.5	0.8	30.9	100.0	42.9	8.4	•	48.7
August.....	100.0	54.7	17.0	1.6	26.7	100.0	46.8	7.8	•	45.4
September.....	100.0	53.9	18.4	1.2	26.5	100.0	50.7	8.7	•	40.6
October.....	100.0	52.4	17.6	1.5	28.5	100.0	50.0	7.8	0.5	41.7
November.....	100.0	50.7	18.1	2.9	28.3	100.0	49.1	8.9	0.5	41.5
December.....	100.0	50.7	18.1	2.9	28.3	100.0	49.1	8.9	0.5	41.5
1934										
January.....	100.0	51.0	18.2	3.4	27.4	100.0	46.6	7.6	0.4	45.4
February.....	100.0	49.8	17.5	4.4	28.3	100.0	46.5	8.2	0.4	44.9
March.....	100.0	52.3	16.8	4.9	26.0	100.0	47.5	7.9	0.4	44.2
April.....	100.0	54.5	16.4	3.6	25.5	100.0	53.1	7.6	0.4	38.9
May.....	100.0	55.8	15.0	4.7	24.5	100.0	52.7	7.9	0.3	39.1
June.....	100.0	55.6	15.4	5.0	24.0	100.0	54.9	8.3	0.3	36.5
July.....	100.0	55.5	14.3	4.3	25.9	100.0	51.8	7.4	0.2	40.6
August.....	100.0	55.6	13.9	6.0	24.5	100.0	51.4	8.0	0.2	40.4
September.....	100.0	55.0	13.8	5.7	25.5	100.0	52.8	7.6	0.2	39.4
October.....	100.0	58.6	12.7	5.1	23.6	100.0	55.1	9.3	1.0	34.6
November.....	100.0	57.7	12.0	6.8	23.5	100.0	56.7	9.1	0.9	33.3
December.....	100.0	55.0	12.4	7.3	25.3	100.0	55.1	10.2	0.9	33.8
1935										
January.....	100.0	55.9	11.9	7.1	25.1	100.0	54.6	9.8	0.9	34.7
February.....	100.0	55.9	12.1	7.2	24.8	100.0	53.5	9.3	1.2	36.0
March.....	100.0	56.7	11.5	6.7	25.1	100.0	53.6	9.9	1.2	35.3
April.....	100.0	58.1	11.8	6.3	23.8	100.0	55.2	10.1	1.3	33.4
May.....	100.0	57.3	10.6	9.4	22.7	100.0	56.1	10.7	1.1	32.1
June.....	100.0	58.8	10.2	9.7	21.3	100.0	59.3	10.0	1.1	29.6
July.....	100.0	60.1	9.1	8.5	22.3	100.0	55.4	9.8	0.7	34.1
August.....	100.0	60.7	9.7	8.6	21.0	100.0	57.2	10.0	0.8	32.0
September.....	100.0	62.0	9.8	8.6	19.6	100.0	58.9	9.8	0.8	30.5
October.....	100.0	62.4	8.6	8.8	20.2	100.0	59.3	9.3	1.2	30.2
November.....	100.0	62.2	8.9	9.4	19.5	100.0	59.7	9.9	1.3	29.1
December.....	100.0	61.4	8.8	10.1	19.7	100.0	59.2	10.2	1.7	28.9

See footnotes at end of table.

Table 6.—Employment Status of Labor-Market Entrants of the 1933 Eighth-Grade Graduating Class, by Month, January 1, 1933–July 1, 1938, and by Sex—Continued

Year and month	Male					Female				
	Total in labor market	Em- ployed full time †	Em- ployed part time ‡	Work pro- grams †	Seek- ing work	Total in labor market	Em- ployed full time †	Em- ployed part time ‡	Work pro- grams †	Seek- ing work
<i>Percent distribution</i>										
1936										
January.....	100.0	61.8	9.2	10.1	18.9	100.0	54.6	9.8	0.9	34.7
February.....	100.0	61.0	9.6	9.3	20.1	100.0	53.4	9.4	1.2	36.0
March.....	100.0	62.2	9.1	9.4	19.3	100.0	53.6	9.9	1.2	35.3
April.....	100.0	64.3	8.9	9.3	17.5	100.0	55.2	10.1	1.3	33.4
May.....	100.0	64.5	8.3	9.3	17.9	100.0	56.1	10.7	1.1	32.1
June.....	100.0	66.9	8.8	9.1	15.2	100.0	59.3	10.0	1.1	29.6
July.....	100.0	68.6	8.2	7.7	15.5	100.0	55.4	9.8	0.7	34.1
August.....	100.0	70.5	8.0	8.0	13.5	100.0	57.2	10.0	0.8	32.0
September.....	100.0	71.0	7.6	7.8	13.6	100.0	58.9	9.8	0.8	30.5
October.....	100.0	73.0	7.2	7.2	12.6	100.0	59.3	9.3	1.2	30.2
November.....	100.0	71.4	7.1	7.2	14.3	100.0	59.7	9.9	1.3	29.1
December.....	100.0	70.4	7.5	7.2	14.9	100.0	59.2	10.2	1.7	28.9
1937										
January.....	100.0	66.7	7.5	6.4	17.4	100.0	64.3	9.8	3.3	22.6
February.....	100.0	65.7	8.3	5.7	20.3	100.0	58.3	9.9	3.1	28.7
March.....	100.0	68.6	8.6	5.6	17.2	100.0	60.5	10.1	3.1	26.3
April.....	100.0	72.7	8.3	5.1	13.9	100.0	63.6	10.5	3.1	22.8
May.....	100.0	75.5	7.9	4.5	12.1	100.0	63.5	10.8	3.6	22.1
June.....	100.0	77.7	7.6	4.1	10.6	100.0	64.3	11.2	3.2	21.3
July.....	100.0	70.0	9.0	2.6	18.4	100.0	51.7	12.0	2.2	34.1
August.....	100.0	72.9	9.1	3.0	15.0	100.0	55.9	12.1	2.0	30.0
September.....	100.0	73.8	8.7	2.7	14.8	100.0	58.0	12.2	1.9	27.9
October.....	100.0	75.0	7.9	2.6	14.5	100.0	61.0	12.2	2.3	24.5
November.....	100.0	73.8	7.9	3.1	15.2	100.0	60.5	12.9	2.6	24.0
December.....	100.0	71.4	8.2	3.2	17.2	100.0	62.1	12.8	2.7	22.4
1938										
January.....	100.0	66.8	8.7	3.4	21.1	100.0	59.1	11.8	3.0	26.1
February.....	100.0	63.8	9.6	3.4	23.2	100.0	55.7	12.8	3.1	28.4
March.....	100.0	64.8	9.7	3.8	21.7	100.0	56.2	12.9	3.3	27.6
April.....	100.0	65.5	9.4	4.2	20.9	100.0	58.7	13.1	3.5	24.7
May.....	100.0	65.9	9.9	4.4	19.8	100.0	58.4	13.3	3.6	24.7
June.....	100.0	66.4	10.4	4.6	18.6	100.0	58.4	13.0	3.8	24.8
July.....	100.0	65.5	10.4	4.6	19.5	100.0	57.4	12.7	3.8	26.1

*Less than 0.05 percent.

†Percent not computed for fewer than 50 cases.

‡ 30 hours or more per week.

§ Less than 30 hours per week.

¶ Includes Federal, State, and local emergency work-relief employment.

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Table 7.—Activities on July 1, 1938, of Youth Who Had Not Entered the Labor Market, by Sex

Activity	Male			Female		
	1929 class	1931 class	1933 class	1929 class	1931 class	1933 class
Total youth interviewed.....	4, 493	4, 691	5, 235	4, 727	5, 197	5, 732
Had entered labor market.....	4, 311	4, 200	4, 210	4, 300	4, 431	4, 232
Had not entered labor market.....	182	491	1, 025	427	766	1, 500
	<i>Percent distribution</i>					
Youth who had not entered labor market.....	100	100	100	100	100	100
In school.....	81	93	91	13	54	64
Housewife.....	—	—	—	59	30	15
Other ¹	19	7	9	28	16	21

¹ Includes illness, unpaid family work, "taking a vacation," "traveling," etc.

Table 8.—Average Weekly Earnings on First Full-Time Jobs, by Reason Youth First Left School, and by Sex

Reason first left school	Average weekly earnings on first full-time job	
	Male	Female
Total.....	\$15. 40	\$12. 70
Financial.....	15. 00	12. 30
No desire for further education.....	16. 10	13. 30
Preferred to work.....	17. 10	14. 20
Disliked school.....	15. 40	11. 90
Illness or physical disability.....	15. 30	11. 70
Marriage.....	†	11. 70
Other.....	16. 10	12. 00

† Average not computed for fewer than 50 cases.

Table 9.—Year and Month in Which Youth First Entered the Labor Market, by Eighth-Grade Graduating Class

Year and month	Class of eighth-grade graduation			Year and month	Class of eighth-grade graduation		
	1929	1931	1933		1929	1931	1933
1928				1933—Continued			
December	46	—	—	October	74	38	27
1929				November	57	32	25
January	136	—	—	December	127	70	35
February	34	—	—	1934			
March	11	—	—	January	250	116	86
April	9	—	—	February	80	48	21
May	33	—	—	March	68	54	35
June	481	—	—	April	76	65	34
July	23	—	—	May	82	55	36
August	28	—	—	June	408	414	263
September	37	—	—	July	50	23	17
October	36	—	—	August	59	37	6
November	19	—	—	September	59	55	33
December	38	—	—	October	37	53	27
1930				November	31	51	26
January	73	—	—	December	63	213	64
February	22	—	—	1935			
March	32	—	—	January	72	373	135
April	26	—	—	February	28	93	49
May	33	—	—	March	34	75	44
June	264	—	—	April	38	71	37
July	14	—	—	May	51	148	48
August	13	—	—	June	156	1,698	413
September	34	—	—	July	35	96	23
October	24	—	—	August	26	110	26
November	21	—	—	September	33	189	63
December	60	5	—	October	18	91	59
1931				November	23	87	50
January	91	118	—	December	33	165	70
February	30	10	—	1936			
March	38	11	—	January	26	248	147
April	31	12	—	February	15	89	62
May	48	34	—	March	22	100	67
June	320	364	—	April	18	90	79
July	19	15	—	May	21	113	79
August	19	11	—	June	96	412	490
September	23	26	—	July	8	64	44
October	19	18	—	August	21	70	45
November	32	28	—	September	37	73	65
December	56	32	—	October	13	54	58
1932				November	10	39	69
January	33	88	—	December	22	69	149
February	34	29	—	1937			
March	36	29	—	January	20	70	609
April	28	18	—	February	12	31	124
May	42	29	—	March	12	40	89
June	346	225	—	April	9	34	83
July	20	8	—	May	31	38	96
August	26	10	—	June	164	170	2,006
September	29	34	—	July	20	26	144
October	36	23	—	August	29	28	178
November	26	25	—	September	41	34	168
December	204	51	7	October	18	16	93
1933				November	9	22	109
January	357	112	110	December	27	39	164
February	65	24	5	1938			
March	38	37	14	January	13	25	256
April	50	48	12	February	7	10	118
May	95	49	15	March	23	12	106
June	1,611	381	288	April	10	8	72
July	79	24	7	May	16	22	90
August	94	21	9	June	67	68	337
September	111	51	25				

Table 10.—Age Youth First Entered the Labor Market, by Usual Occupational Class of Father

Age youth first entered the labor market	Usual occupational class of father					
	Profes- sional	Proprie- tary, man- agerial, and official	Clerical	Skilled	Semi- skilled	Un- skilled
	<i>Percent distribution</i>					
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100
Under 16 years.....	3	6	5	10	15	14
16-17 years.....	25	31	33	36	38	38
18-19 years.....	50	47	50	45	40	40
20 years and over.....	22	16	12	9	7	8
Average age (years).....	18.9	18.6	18.5	18.2	17.9	17.9

Table 11.—Education of All Interviewed Youth, by Eighth-Grade Graduating Class

Years of education completed	Eighth-grade graduating class			
	Total	1929	1931	1933
Total	30,075	9,220	9,888	10,967
	<i>Percent distribution</i>			
Total	100	100	100	100
8.....	10	13	10	8
9-11.....	28	26	28	29
12.....	45	43	44	48
13-15.....	14	10	17	15
16 and more.....	3	8	1	—
Average.....	12.3	12.3	12.3	12.3

Table 12.—Industrial Groups of First Full-Time Jobs and of Full-Time Jobs on July 1, 1938 by Sex

Industrial group	First full-time jobs		Full-time jobs on July 1, 1938	
	Male	Female	Male	Female
Total	12,057	11,438	8,800	6,419
	<i>Percent distribution</i>			
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Agriculture	3.1	0.2	1.1	0.1
Other extractive ¹	0.9	0.1	0.7	0.1
Manufacturing and mechanical	36.3	22.6	40.7	28.0
Building and construction.....	5.1	0.4	5.0	0.4
Iron and steel.....	7.9	1.2	10.3	2.1
Lumber and furniture.....	2.6	0.5	1.8	0.5
Paper, printing, and allied.....	3.7	2.2	3.6	2.7
Food and allied.....	5.6	5.4	6.4	5.4
Chemical and allied.....	1.3	1.6	1.9	2.0
Clothing.....	0.9	3.4	0.9	3.1
Shoe and leather.....	2.4	2.4	3.0	4.9
Other.....	6.8	5.5	7.8	6.9
Transportation and communication	9.4	3.0	8.8	5.4
Water transportation.....	1.8	0.1	1.3	0.1
Telephone and telegraph.....	2.4	2.2	1.0	4.3
Steam and street railroad.....	1.5	0.1	2.4	0.2
Truck, transfer, and cab.....	1.4	0.2	1.8	0.5
Other.....	2.3	0.4	2.3	0.3
Trade	37.6	36.1	36.6	36.3
Retail automobile and allied.....	3.9	0.4	3.6	0.5
Other retail.....	22.8	24.3	17.4	18.6
Wholesale.....	5.7	4.1	7.9	6.0
Banking, insurance, and real estate.....	2.6	4.1	4.6	7.9
Other.....	2.6	3.2	3.1	3.3
Public service (not elsewhere classified)	1.3	0.9	1.9	1.7
Professional service	5.1	10.0	4.4	11.0
Recreation and amusement.....	3.1	1.4	2.0	1.4
Professional.....	1.4	6.9	1.5	7.5
Semiprofessional.....	0.6	1.7	0.9	2.1
Domestic and personal service	6.2	27.0	5.7	17.3
Private home.....	0.4	15.5	0.3	4.9
Restaurant and allied.....	2.7	5.5	2.3	4.7
Hotel and allied.....	0.9	0.4	0.9	0.5
Barber and beauty shop.....	0.3	2.8	0.2	3.6
Other.....	1.9	2.8	2.0	3.6
Unknown	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1

¹ Includes forestry, fishing, and extraction of minerals.

Table 13.—How Youth Learned of All Full- and Part-Time Jobs

How youth learned of jobs	Full-time jobs ¹	Part-time jobs ²
	Total.....	66,590
<i>Percent distribution</i>		
Total.....	100	100
Friend.....	27	28
Personal application.....	24	22
Parent.....	7	6
Other relative.....	9	7
At school.....	4	4
Former employer.....	16	19
Employment agency.....	5	3
Want ad.....	3	2
Other.....	5	9

¹ 30 hours or more per week.
² 15-29 hours per week.

Table 14.—How Youth Learned of Jobs, by Usual Occupational Class of Father

How youth learned of jobs	Usual occupational class of father						
	Total	Professional	Proprietory, managerial, and official	Clerical	Skilled	Semi-skilled	Unskilled
<i>Percent distribution</i>							
Total ¹	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
Friend.....	27	28	26	28	27	27	28
Personal application.....	24	24	22	26	24	25	23
Parent.....	7	7	13	7	6	6	5
Other relative.....	9	7	8	8	9	9	9
At school.....	4	6	4	5	4	4	3
Former employer.....	16	14	15	13	18	17	20
Employment agency.....	4	6	4	6	4	4	4
Want ad.....	3	2	2	2	3	3	2
Other.....	6	6	6	5	5	5	6

¹ Includes all jobs of 15 hours or more per week.

Table 15.—How Youth Learned of Jobs, by Race

How youth learned of jobs	Total	Race			
		White	Negro	Oriental	Other
		<i>Percent distribution</i>			
Total ¹	100	100	100	100	100
Friend.....	27	26	38	39	26
Personal application.....	24	24	18	16	23
Parent.....	7	7	5	6	7
Other relative.....	9	8	10	6	9
At school.....	4	4	1	2	3
Former employer.....	16	17	14	15	22
Employment agency.....	4	5	2	4	3
Want ad.....	3	3	1	2	4
Other.....	6	6	8	10	4

¹ Includes all jobs of 15 hours or more per week.

Table 16.—Occupational Classes Before and After Shifts Between Full-Time Jobs

Occupational class after shift	Occupational class before shift												
	Total	Professional	Proprietary, managerial, and official	Clerical						Unskilled			
				Total	Accounting and semiprofessional	Stenography	Other clerical	Sales	Skilled	Semiskilled	Total	Servant and domestic	Laborer
	<i>Percent distribution</i>												
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
Professional.....	2	56	1	1	3	*	1	1	*	1	1	1	1
Proprietary, managerial, and official.....	3	3	15	3	2	*	2	6	4	2	2	1	2
Clerical.....	37	17	34	65	82	95	63	53	20	21	18	18	18
Accounting and semiprofessional.....	3	1	2	6	33	7	5	3	2	1	1	2	1
Stenography and allied.....	6	2	1	16	11	66	7	3	*	1	1	1	*
Other clerical.....	15	8	9	24	24	18	38	15	7	10	8	7	9
Sales.....	13	6	22	19	14	4	13	32	2	11	8	8	8
Skilled.....	4	3	6	2	1	*	2	2	36	5	3	3	4
Semiskilled.....	34	13	30	26	8	8	22	26	29	55	30	24	40
Unskilled.....	20	8	14	9	4	4	10	12	10	16	46	55	35
Servant and domestic.....	11	6	4	5	3	2	4	6	3	6	31	51	5
Laborer.....	9	2	10	4	1	2	6	6	7	10	15	4	30

* Less than 0.5 percent.

Table 17.—Activities of Labor-Market Entrants on Each Birthday, Fifteenth Through Twenty-third, by Sex

Activity	Birthday anniversary								
	15th	16th	17th	18th	19th	20th	21st	22d	23d
	<i>Percent distribution</i>								
Total males	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
In school.....	95	89	77	54	29	16	10	7	5
Others not in labor market.....	1	1	2	4	4	3	3	2	2
Unemployed.....	1	2	4	9	14	15	13	12	12
Employed part time ¹	•	1	2	4	6	6	5	5	5
Employed full time ²	3	7	15	29	47	60	69	74	76
Total females	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
In school.....	94	85	73	48	22	11	7	4	2
Housewives.....	•	1	2	5	9	14	19	25	29
Others not in labor market.....	2	4	6	9	11	9	8	7	6
Unemployed.....	1	3	5	10	13	11	9	8	7
Employed part time ¹	•	1	2	4	6	7	6	5	6
Employed full time ²	2	6	12	24	39	43	51	51	50

* Less than 0.5 percent.

¹ Less than 30 hours per week.

² 30 hours or more per week.

Table 18.—Employment Status of Labor-Market Youth on Each Birthday, Fifteenth Through Twenty-Third, by Sex

Employment status	Birthday anniversary								
	15th	16th	17th	18th	19th	20th	21st	22d	23d
	<i>Percent distribution</i>								
In labor market, males	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
Seeking work.....	22	20	18	19	17	14	11	10	10
Work programs.....	•	1	3	3	5	4	4	3	3
Employed part time ¹	11	10	10	10	8	7	6	6	5
Employed full time ²	67	69	69	68	70	75	79	81	82
In labor market, females	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
Seeking work.....	36	32	27	26	21	15	12	10	9
Work programs.....	—	•	1	1	2	2	2	3	2
Employed part time ¹	7	8	10	11	10	10	9	8	9
Employed full time ²	57	60	62	62	67	73	77	79	80

* Less than 0.5 percent.

¹ Less than 30 hours per week.

² 30 hours or more per week.

Table 19.—Occupational Classes of Employed Youth on Each Birthday, Fifteenth Through Twenty-Third, by Sex

Occupational class	Birthday anniversary								
	15th	16th	17th	18th	19th	20th	21st	22d	23d
	<i>Percent distribution</i>								
Employed full time, males.....	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
Professional and semiprofessional and proprietary, managerial and official.....	4	3	4	5	6	7	8	10	10
Stenography and other clerical.....	31	25	20	21	21	20	20	19	17
Sales.....	17	16	16	16	15	15	13	13	14
Skilled.....	4	5	4	4	5	5	7	8	9
Semiskilled.....	31	38	40	40	40	41	39	37	37
Unskilled.....	13	13	16	14	13	12	13	13	13
Employed full time, females.....	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
Professional and semiprofessional and proprietary, managerial, and official.....	3	4	6	8	10	11	11	13	12
Stenography and allied.....	3	4	6	12	15	18	18	18	16
Other clerical.....	9	10	10	14	17	18	18	17	17
Sales.....	10	9	10	12	13	12	13	13	13
Semiskilled ¹	46	46	43	33	29	28	28	28	29
Unskilled.....	29	27	25	21	16	13	12	11	18

¹ Includes a small proportion of skilled workers.

Table 20.—Age of Youth at Eighth-Grade Graduation, by Usual Occupational Class of Father

Age at eighth-grade graduation	Usual occupational class of father						
	Total	Professional	Proprietary, managerial, and official	Clerical	Skilled	Semi-skilled	Unskilled
Total.....	130,075	1,331	5,449	4,090	7,099	4,914	3,536
	<i>Percent distribution</i>						
Total.....	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
12 years and under.....	5	12	6	8	4	4	3
13 years.....	32	42	36	38	30	29	25
14 years.....	39	35	37	38	40	39	39
15 years.....	17	10	15	12	18	19	21
16 years and over.....	7	3	6	4	8	9	12
Average age (years).....	14.3	13.9	14.2	14.1	14.4	14.4	14.6

¹ Refers to all interviewed youth, including those whose fathers were deceased or absent, or for whom no usual occupational class was reported.

Table 21.—Age of Youth at Eighth-Grade Graduation, by Section of City

Age at eighth-grade graduation	Section of city ¹			
	Total	Low	Medium	High
Total	30,075	7,711	15,234	7,061
	Percent distribution			
Total	100	100	100	100
12 years and under	5	4	5	8
13 years	32	25	32	39
14 years	39	39	39	36
15 years	17	21	17	12
16 years and over	7	11	7	5
Average age (years)	14.3	14.5	14.3	14.1

¹ Rental area in which the youth lived at the time of graduating from the eighth grade.

² Refers to all interviewed youth, including a small number for whom section of city (rental area) was not ascertainable.

Table 22.—Average Annual Earnings of Youth, Cost of Living, and Indexes of Real Annual Earnings, by City

City	Average annual earnings ¹	Cost of living ²	Index of real annual earnings ³
Binghamton	\$785	\$1,243.19	93
Birmingham	657	1,168.85	82
Denver	782	1,246.07	92
Duluth	716	(⁴)	(⁴)
St. Louis	749	1,339.55	82
San Francisco	949	1,389.87	100
Seattle	847	1,233.35	101

¹ Median earnings during the year July 1, 1937–July 1, 1938, of youth employed throughout the year or with some unemployment. Excludes youth with any employment of less than 16 hours per week, as earnings on such jobs were not obtained.

² Annual cost of living, on a maintenance level, of a 4-person manual worker's family in 1935. Stecker, Margaret Loomis, *Intercity Differences in Cost of Living in March 1935, 59 Cities*, Division of Social Research, Works Progress Administration, Washington, D. C., 1937, pp. 158–159.

³ Obtained by adjusting actual average annual earnings by the cost of living, and expressing the result as a percentage of the earnings in San Francisco, the city in which actual earnings were the highest.

⁴ Not available.

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