Labour mobility and employment stability: rhetoric and reality on the sex differential in labour-market behaviour

Catherine Hakim

Using national data for Britain and other industrial societies, we assess claims that sex differentials in labour mobility and employment stability have disappeared with rising female labour-force participation rates. Results for Britain show a continuing sex differential of 50 per cent in the standard measures of labour turnover and job tenure. These sex differentials are typical of the European Community and other industrial societies. Further, sex differentials in labour mobility and employment continuity are dramatically increased when the focus changes to movement in and out of the labour force instead of attachment to a particular employer. Women are two to four times more likely than men to enter and exit the workforce in a given period. Work histories display even more fundamental sex differences, and show that discontinuous employment has been replacing continuous employment and the homemaker career among women. The methodological implications for the analysis of cross-sectional and longitudinal data, and the substantive and theoretical implications for understanding women's employment are addressed. Qualitative divisions within the female workforce can no longer be ignored, as they impact on occupational grade, earnings and life chances, and can distort cross-national comparisons.

Introduction

Immediately after World War Two there was much discussion of sex differentials in labour-market behaviour and earnings—the two being seen as automatically linked. Since then, while debate about sex differentials in earnings has continued, discussion of sex differentials in labour mobility and employment stability has almost disappeared from the sociological literature. Sociologists, along with economists (Blau and Ferber, 1992: 80, 162) have suggested that sex differentials in employment patterns are disappearing, so that major reviews of trends and issues in women's employment now routinely omit any discussion of labour turnover, job tenure, continuity of employment, or cumulative work experience and their implications for earnings and the status-attainment process (Dex, 1985; Jenson *et al.*, 1988; Meulders *et al.*, 1993; Reskin and Padavic, 1994). This paper seeks to reconsider this situation by reviewing evidence for Britain and other industrialized countries to assess whether sex differentials in labour mobility and employment patterns have in reality disappeared, thus breaking the link with the sex differential in earnings. Marked sex differentials in labour mobility and employment stability are found to have persisted over the last forty years, albeit diminishing in magnitude. Indeed, in some cases differentials have increased, as illustrated by the expansion of discontinuous employment in Britain at the expense of continuous employment. The final sections of the paper discuss the methodological implications of these findings for longitudinal

data analysis, and the substantive and theoretical implications for broader labour-market analysis, especially for cross-national comparisons.

Changing perspectives

There is firm evidence that there was a marked sex differential in work orientations and labour-market behaviour in both Britain and the United States immediately after World War Two (Richardson, 1954; Myrdal and Klein, 1956; Blau and Ferber, 1992: 79). Post-war writers on the 'controversial phenomenon' of women's employment sought to defend women's right to work, demonstrating their physical and mental abilities for wage work, and suggesting novel arrangements (such as part-time work) which could ease women's double burden of domestic duties and employment (see for example Myrdal and Klein, 1956; repr. 1968). None the less, their explicit espousal of this cause did not prevent a dispassionate data-based analysis of the issue. In particular they addressed the sex differentials in work attitudes, behaviour and performance that were claimed by employers to justify their preference for male workers over female workers and to justify lower rates of pay for women doing the same job as men (Myrdal and Klein, 1968: 91–115). Of these, the most important behavioural differences were women's higher rates of absenteeism, higher labour turnover, and lower employment stability with an employer, all giving rise to additional costs. Employers' investment in on-the-job training offered a lower return in the case of female workers, who were less likely to stay with the firm, due to more job-hopping or to leaving the workforce for domestic reasons; there were also the extra recruitment costs of replacing workers who left.[1] An average annual turnover rate of 32 per cent is quoted for women in the USA in 1957 (Blau and Ferber, 1992: 79). More detailed evidence, for the USA and Britain, was analysed by Myrdal and Klein (1968: 91–115), who admitted that it all pointed to women being the less stable workers, with substantially higher rates of absenteeism and turnover. They attributed this in part to 'a certain laxity' and 'immaturity' in some women's attitude to their job (Myrdal and Klein, 1968: 105).

Twenty years later, national surveys of British managers' attitudes towards women at work were already excusing and downplaying marked sex differentials in turnover and absenteeism as unimportant (Hunt, 1975: 101, 105, 107, 109). However most employers continued to perceive important differences between male and female full-time and part-time workers in their work attitudes and behaviour, views that were corroborated by analyses of actual absenteeism, job tenure and job mobility (Hunt, 1975: 95–6).

Another twenty years on, and social scientists have defined the problem of labour turnover and employment instability out of existence. Studies routinely draw the conclusion that there is no evidence that women in general, and women working part-time in particular, show a lesser degree of attachment to work in terms of loyalty to a particular employer (Marsh, 1991: 57), that the employment stability of women part-time workers is no lower than among women full-time workers (Dex, 1987: 115), and that the evidence that part-time jobs are high-turnover jobs should not be taken at face value (Elias and White, 1991: 32–6, 58). When differences are noted, they are attributed to the occupations in question rather than to the incumbents, to labour-market segmentation (Blossfeld and Mayer, 1988: 129; Elias and White, 1991: 5), or to age effects (Elias and White, 1991). Studies that reveal dramatic sex differentials in work orientations and employment patterns emphasize the similarities between men and women (Pollert, 1981: 79–115; Elias and Main, 1982: 3–11; Dex, 1985: 20–46) or, *in extremis*, reject the differences as implausible even when surveys yield the same result year after year (European Commission, 1994: 87).[2] Some sociologists simply dismiss sex differentials in work experience and work commitment as implausible or out-of-date ideas (Reskin and Padavic, 1994: 39–41, 86, 112–13). Some may find it inappropriate to refer to labour economics textbooks to identify the current research agenda among sociologists. None the less it is indicative that two major recent textbooks on labour economics (Ashenfelter and Layard, 1986; Blau and Ferber, 1992) do not include separate chapters on patterns of labour mobility and (women's) work histories across the life-cycle. Even though other chapters in them contain passing references to this topic, noting

inadequacies in data on work histories and work experience, it is clear that economists too have suggested that sex differentials in employment patterns are disappearing (Blau and Ferber, 1992: 80, 162).

A key feature of recent debates is the suggestion that high turnover or low employment stability is attributable to the way jobs are organized rather than to the characteristics of the workers doing them. At one extreme, all the characteristics of typically female occupations and part-time work are presented as features built into the design of jobs by employers. Cohn (1985) offered the most sophisticated and detailed development of the thesis that high female turnover rates are artificially created by employers for labour-intensive occupations employing large numbers of women—such as clerical work. His analysis covered the period 1870 to 1940 in Britain, with more general comparative information on the USA and other countries, notably from the ILO (1962) review of discrimination against married women. Cohn was also one of the few scholars to focus on the marriage prohibition[3] as a key instrument of labour policy, specifically as the artificial cause of higher turnover rates among female clerical workers than among male clerical workers in the Post Office and the Great Western Railway in Britain. However, Cohn himself admitted that the creation of artificially high turnover rates among (young) women workers could not serve as a general explanation of why women were concentrated in low-status clerical and other jobs (p. 236) and he admitted that other factors were equally if not more important in explaining patterns of occupational segregation in manual and professional occupations. And the key weakness of Cohn's thesis is that, even if proven, it was time-specific and historical rather than generally applicable. The marriage prohibitition was outlawed from 1971 onwards in Britain through equal opportunities and sex discrimination legislation. Direct and overt discrimination against women, or married women, is now unlawful throughout Western industrial societies and in many other countries as well. Like many others, Cohn believed that the sex differential in turnover had been exaggerated (p. 92). However, he presented no evidence apart from his own data for the period up to 1940.[4]

Across Europe, employers now organize the great majority of part-time jobs as permanent jobs: about 80 per cent of part-time jobs are permanent compared with 90 per cent of full-time jobs (Hakim, 1990: 174). In practice, there is little difference between the full-time and part-time workforces in eligibility for statutory employment rights (Hakim, 1989*a*, 1995*b*). Employers' policies cannot account for any labour mobility differentials between part-timers and full-timers.[5] Thus there is no necessary connection between the expansion of part-time work and labour mobility.

Before examining the evidence from recent surveys for Britain and other industrial societies, we outline the two types of survey data and the standard measures in this field.

Data sources and standard measures of labour mobility

Conventional analyses are restricted to the type of data collected in regular surveys, such as, in Britain, the New Earnings Survey (still 'new' after 25 years), the General Household Survey, and the Labour Force Survey (Hakim, 1982: 97–123). These surveys offer the standard measures of labour turnover and job tenure, with the key advantage of measuring national trends over long stretches of time on a consistent basis.

Less frequent are the one-off surveys collecting detailed information on work histories over the life-cycle, either retrospectively or within prospective longitudinal studies such as the National Longitudinal Surveys (NLS) and Panel Study of Income Dynamics (PSID) projects initiated in the mid-1960s in the USA (Sproat *et al.*, 1985; Hakim, 1987: 91–5; O'Neill and Polachek, 1993), the Integrated Database for Labour Market Research in Denmark (Leth-Sorensen and Rohwer, 1993) or the 1% Longitudinal Study (LS) in Britain (OPCS, 1973, 1988). Recent British work-history surveys include the 1975 National Training Survey, which was never fully coded (Elias and Main, 1982), the 1980 Women and Employment Survey, which did not include men (Martin and Roberts, 1984) and the 1986 Social Change and Economic Life Initiative (SCELI) survey, which was not a random national survey but a collection of surveys in six localities (Scott, 1994).

The 1994 Survey of Working Lives promises to be the first complete national survey collecting retrospective work histories for the British workforce, similar to the 1981–3 West German Life History Study (Blossfeld, 1987; Blossfeld and Mayer, 1988). Such special surveys have significant advantages — for example allowing cohort and life-cycle effects to be separated (Blossfeld, 1987; Main, 1988*a*), but perhaps more importantly in allowing a range of innovative and exploratory analyses. However, the scope for originality also creates problems of non-comparability across studies, as researchers apply their own unique definitions and classifications to analyses of selective data subsets, as illustrated below by incompatible definitions of continuous employment. The standard measures of labour mobility used in regular statistical surveys are rarely applied in special research surveys.

There are three standard measures of labour mobility and its converse, employment stability.[6] *Labour turnover* strictly defined has to be measured at establishment level, and is normally measured on a per annum basis. It refers to the proportion of workers employed at the beginning of a year (or some other period) who were no longer working for the establishment at the end of the year, for whatever reason, and is also referred to as the discharge rate, or the separation rate. Separations include people who resign from their job (the quit rate) either to take another job or, for many women, to leave the workforce temporarily or permanently, redundancies, and any other form of dismissal or termination. An alternative that is easier to measure is the *engagement rate*, the proportion of people employed by an establishment at the end of a 12-month period who were not employed by that establishment at the beginning of that year. Surveys that include questions on job tenure invariably distinguish people who have been working for their employer for periods of less than one year, providing one approximation to labour turnover rates. In general, engagement rates and separation rates are usually of the same order of magnitude, unless the level of employment is rising or falling. Both engagement rates and separation rates underestimate total annual labour turnover, as there will always be a small number of people whose employment starts and finishes in less than 12 months. These seasonal and casual workers can add another 2–4 per cent to annual turnover rates of around 20 to 25 per cent as measured by separation or engagement rates in Britain (Department of Employment, 1972: 348) and the USA (Cohen and Schwartz, 1980).

A more direct measure of employment stability is *enterprise tenure*, more commonly known as *job tenure*. The term 'job' is vague as it may refer to employment with a particular employer, workplace or enterprise, or in a particular occupation. Strictly defined, job tenure refers to a worker's length of service with an employer or enterprise, disregarding any change of occupation. Job tenure is theoretically important as it provides a measure of the firm-specific skills and 'tacit knowledge' in the job that is accumulated over time but has no formal recognition in the shape of educational qualifications or certificates. Job tenure is important also in a policy context as it corresponds to the length of service criterion in labour law, which determines eligibility for key employment rights and benefits across much of Europe (Hakim, 1989*a*; Hepple and Hakim, 1996; Hakim 1995*b*). Labour Force Surveys collect data on current jobs in progress, from which it is easy to estimate average *uncompleted* tenure of jobs in progress (OECD, 1984, 1989, 1993; European Commission, 1994). The same data can be used also for the more complex calculations required to estimate average *completed* lengths of jobs (Main, 1981, 1982; Burgess and Rees, 1994).

Continuity in labour turnover and job tenure

The New Earnings Survey (NES) was the first British survey used to calculate labour turnover rates (Tables 1, 2, and 3) and analyse job tenure (Main, 1981, 1982) and has been used more recently to assess the impact of job tenure on earnings (Sloane, 1990: 150–5). The General Household Survey (GHS) provides the longest time-series on turnover rates (Table 4) and job tenure (Table 5), although today the Labour Force Survey (LFS) is more widely used (Tables 6 and 7). Together they show that sex differentials in labour turnover and job tenure continue, although they vary over time.

In 1968 the female annual labour turnover rate of 27 per cent was 50 per cent higher than the 18 per cent rate for men; these turnover rates and the sex

Table 1. *Labour turnover rates 1968–1971*

Proportion (%) of employees with employer for under 12 months	1968	1970	1971
Men	18	16	15
Women	27	25	23

Note: Percentages rounded.
Source: New Earnings Survey data for 1968, 1970 and 1971, Great Britain, data extracted from Tables 1, 2, and 3 in Department of Employment (1972).

Table 2. *Labour turnover rates among full-time and part-time workers, Great Britain*

		Proportion (%) of employees with employer for under 12 months			
		Full-time		Part-time	
		Men	Women	Men	Women
White-collar adult workers	1970	10	22	18	26
	1971	10	20	17	23
Manual adult workers	1970	15	21	22	26
	1971	14	19	19	22

Note: Percentages rounded.
Source: New Earnings Survey data for 1970 and 1971, Great Britain, data extracted from Table 4 in Department of Employment (1972).

differential remained constant into the 1990s (Tables 1, 4, and 6).[7] The most accurate measure of labour turnover is provided by the GHS. Like the LFS, this is a continuous national interview survey, but unlike the LFS proxy interviews are not normally permitted and the quality of the data is consequently much higher (Hakim, 1982: 8, 120). The GHS thus provides the best measure of trends over the last twenty years in the sex differential in labour turnover. The unequivocal conclusion is that sex differences are as high in the 1990s as they were twenty years ago, even though turnover rates have fluctuated a good deal over the period, in line with the economy (Table 4). In 1973 and 1990, among full-time workers, job changing among women was 50 per cent higher than for men: 24 per cent versus 16 per cent had started their current job in the preceding 12 months in 1973, 21 per cent and 14 per cent, respectively were in new jobs in 1990. These figures are consistent with the LFS results for 1989, showing that 19 per cent of all men and 27 per cent of all women had been in their current job for less than one year (Table 6).

When quit rates declined sharply in the early 1980s, in response to recession (Table 4), the sex differential was reduced to just a few percentage points among full-time workers and seemed to be disappearing altogether. However, quit rates rose sharply again as the economy expanded in the late 1980s and by 1990 the long-standing sex differential of 50 per cent had re-established itself. It appears that the usefully detailed NES data for the early 1970s cannot be rejected as 'out-of-date' since turnover rates were the same in 1970 and 1990, a conclusion reinforced by the GHS showing that the sex differential in job tenure has also remained constant over the last two decades despite other changes (Burgess and Rees, 1994).

Analysis of LFS data for the 1980s shows that sex differentials in turnover are most pronounced and persistent among prime-age workers (aged 25–50 years) who constitute the majority of the labour force (Elias and Gregory, 1994: 6–9). Among young people who are in the labour-market entry stage, and among older workers who are phasing themselves out of the workforce, sex differentials are smaller and erratic. This accounts for some apparently contradictory research findings. Some studies focus exclusively on young people in the labour-market entry phase. Not surprisingly, they report small sex differentials, which are further reduced in studies which focus even more narrowly on full-time jobs. For example a study by Rosenfeld and Spenner (1992) only covers young people in their 20s who were entering the US labour market in the 1970s, with work-history data limited to information on full-time jobs of at least 25 hours a week held for at least a month, thus excluding a substantial part of the work experience of this young age group (OECD, 1994: 86). This is a common problem in US research, due to the availability of many data-sets on young people under age 30 entering the labour force, and is typical of the wider problem of secondary analysis studies based on inappropriate data-sets.[8] But despite the inclusion of young people and older workers, US studies continue to display sex differentials in turnover rates and average job tenure, with female turnover rates reported as more than double the male rate in 1989 in Blau and Ferber (1992: 79),

Table 3. *Labour turnover by occupation*

	Percentage of employees who had been with their employer for less than twelve months	
	Men	Women
Managers	7	13
Supervisors and foremen	5	6
Engineers, scientists and technologists	10	17
Technicians	12	26
Academic and teaching occupations	13	18
Medical, dental, nursing and welfare work	20	24
Other professional and technical	14	23
Office and communications work	13	23
Sales work	21	33
Security work	10	19
Catering, domestic and other service work	27	22
Farming, forestry and horticultural occupations	13	22
Transport occupations	15	18
Building, engineering and similar occupations	17	24
Textiles, clothing and footwear work	17	21
Other occupations not listed above	15	22
All occupations	15	23

Note: Percentages rounded.
Source: 1971 New Earnings Survey, Great Britain, data extracted from Table 4 in Department of Employment (1972: 351).

although smaller differentials are shown in OECD studies (Table 9).

High female turnover rates are often dismissed as being due to the characteristics of jobs rather than women's personal choices. Tables 2, 3, and 5 show that the sex differential overrides occupational differentials. Even in the early 1970s, before the great expansion of part-time jobs (Hakim, 1993*a*), turnover rates among women working full-time were double those for men in white-collar jobs, and one-third to one-half higher in manual jobs (Table 2). Turnover rates among part-timers were substantially higher than for full-timers, both for men and women, white-collar and blue-collar workers. But they have always been highest of all for women working part-time (Table 2). It appears that as early as 1970, part-time jobs were designed to accommodate women's pre-existing high annual quit rates and engagement rates. The tiny group of men who take part-time work use it in the same way, as a source of short-term jobs as distinct from long-term careers in a particular field, mainly during the transition into employment or out of the labour force into retirement (OECD, 1994: 85–6).

Labour mobility and employment stability vary greatly between occupations. In general, higher-grade occupations have low turnover rates and long job tenures and lower-grade occupations have high turnover and low average job tenures (Tables 3 and 5). Clearly these differences are features of the occupations themselves, and the industries where they are concentrated (European Commission,

Table 4. *Labour turnover among full-time workers, Great Britain, 1973–1990*

	1973	1975	1979	1981	1983	1985	1987	1988	1989	1990
Men starting present full-time job in 12 months before interview										
with a change of employer	14	12	11	6	6	7	10	10	11	10
no change of employer	2	3	3	4	5	6	7	6	5	5
TOTAL — men	16	15	14	11	12	13	16	17	16	14
Women starting present full-time job in 12 months before interview										
with a change of employer	18	15	13	9	9	12	14	15	15	16
no change of employer	7	6	7	6	7	8	6	7	5	5
TOTAL — women	24	21	20	15	15	20	21	23	20	21

Source: General Household Survey data for 1973 to 1990 extracted from Table 9.31 in OPCS (1992).

Table 5. *Mean elapsed job tenure in months by occupation 1975–1991*

Occupations	Men			Woman			Average sex differential
	1983	1990	1975–91 average	1983	1990	1975–91 average	M/F
Managerial and Professional	151	137	144	106	97	102	1.41
Other white collar	118	108	113	81	75	78	1.45
Personal service	81	47	64	78	73	76	0.84
Skilled manual	124	116	120	84	75	80	1.50
Other manual	105	94	100	79	65	72	1.39
TOTAL	127	119	123	80	77	80	1.54

Source: Derived from Burgess and Rees, 1994, Table 4, plus unpublished tables, based on analyses of General Household Survey data for all years 1975 to 1991, data for all in employment.

1994: 87–90). However, the sex differential continues across all occupations, including managerial and professional occupations, so continuity of employment is also a characteristic brought to occupations by the people who select themselves into particular types of work. Careers in highly qualified fields have the lowest turnover and longest tenures because the long periods of education and training required automatically ensure that people with low work commitment drop out long before they enter formal employment (Fiorentine, 1987). However, women have consistently lower average tenures and higher turnover, even here. The only exception is jobs in personal services, which recruit few men, where the sex differential is reversed (Tables 3 and 5). Controlling for occupation tends to reduce the sex differential slightly below the average (Table 5), but it remains substantial in all occupational groups except for the female-dominated personal services group.[9]

We conclude that a sex differential in labour turnover of about 50 per cent is the norm in Britain for the workforce as a whole. Measures of average job tenure also yield a typical sex differential of about 50 per cent (Tables 5–7). Some may argue that a sex differential of only 50 per cent is not especially important. However, the sex differential in average pay is currently only 21 per cent in Britain, yet is

usually treated as problematic. So the tenure gap, which is more than twice as large, must also be treated as significant, in part because it contributes to explaining the pay gap.

Annual labour turnover rates among women are, on average, 50 per cent higher than among men (Table 6). However numbers of female employees fall much more rapidly with length of service than is the case for men. Only one-fifth of women have over ten years' tenure with their employer compared to one-third of men (Table 6). Only 5 per cent of women compared to 20 per cent of men have over 15 years' experience (Sloane, 1990: 150). Between year one and year ten, the sex ratio among employees falls from 37 per cent female to 24 per cent female. It then falls rapidly, to 19 per cent female among people with 11–15 years' experience and 9 per cent among people with over 15 years' tenure with the same employer (calculated from Table 5.12 in Sloane 1990: 154).

Analyses of job tenure suggest that the sex differential can be overtaken by the differential between part-time and full-time workers (Gregg and Wadsworth, 1995: 80). In the USA, where the part-time workforce is smaller and dominated by younger and older workers rather than by prime-age females, part-timers have markedly shorter job tenure and higher turnover rates than full-time workers (Horvath, 1982: 36; Haber *et al.*, 1983: 22; OECD, 1994: 86). In Britain, with a much larger part-time workforce, labour turnover among part-timers is now double the level among full-timers: 25 compared to 13 per cent (Table 7). One-third of full-time workers had over ten years' tenure with their employer in 1992, double the level among part-timers. Comparing these figures for 1992 with the picture for 1986 confirms that the gap between full-timers and part-timers is increasing. As it grows in size, the part-time workforce, which is heavily female-dominated, is becoming more distinctive and differentiated in its labour-market behaviour rather than more integrated into the mainstream workforce.

Denmark provides an interesting comparison here because it probably represents a further stage of development relative to Britain. Due to further development of the redistribution of employment between men and women, female economic activity rates at all ages have reached saturation levels.

Table 6. *The sex differential in job tenure*

% with stated length of time in present employment (years)	Women			Men
	all	youngest child aged < 15	no dependent children	
< 1	27	30	25	19
> 2	59	54	62	70
> 5	37	27	42	52
> 10	20	11	25	35

Source: Spring 1989 Labour Force Survey, Great Britain. Data for people of working age (16–59/64 years) in employment, reported in Department of Employment (1990), Table 8.

Table 7. *The decline in job tenure among full-time and part-time employees, Great Britain, 1986–1992*

Proportion (%) with each length of service with the same employer (years)	Full-time workers		Part-time workers	
	1986	1992	1986	1992
under 1 year	n/a	13	n/a	25
over 2 years	75	77	63	59
over 5 years	55	52	42	33
over 10 years	38	32	22	16

Source: Spring 1986 and Spring 1992 Labour Force Survey, Great Britain. The 1986 data are for employees only (excluding family workers, students and people on government employment schemes for the unemployed), and part-time jobs are those involving less than 30 hours a week. The 1992 data are for employees and the self-employed (excluding family workers and people on government employment schemes for the unemployed), and part-time jobs are self-defined by survey respondents.

Although Denmark is noted for having one of the highest rates of part-time work in Europe, recent trends show women moving out of part-time work into full-time work instead (Leth-Sorensen and Rohwer, 1993) as the hours worked by full-timers are reduced (European Commission 1994: 110). Longitudinal analyses of the Danish Integrated Database for Labour Market Research show that by the 1980s sex differentials in job tenure and labour turnover were disappearing. However, labour mobility differentials between the full-time and part-time workforces remain marked. Throughout the life-cycle, men and women enter and leave part-time jobs far more frequently than full-time jobs

(Table 8). Over a twelve-month period 1988–9 turnover rates average 33 per cent for part-timers (50 per cent among male part-timers, most of whom are young, and 27 per cent among female part-timers) compared to 11 per cent for full-timers (13 per cent among women and 9 per cent among male full-timers). On average, one-quarter of all part-timers have been recruited within the last year, compared to 11 per cent of full-timers. A substantial proportion of the movers are moving in and out of the labour market, rather than just changing jobs or becoming unemployed (Table 8). Denmark illustrates that what first emerges as a sex differential is in fact due to a difference in work orientations between full-timers and part-timers. It just so happens that more women have the work orientations that lead them to choose less demanding part-time work, and men adopt these 'post-modern' orientations more slowly (European Commission, 1994: 104–15).

Table 8. *Labour mobility in Denmark, 1988–1989*

	Turnover from 1988 workforce				Inflow to 1989 workforce			
	Workplace exits		LF exits		Workplace inflow		LF entries	
	FT	PT	FT	PT	FT	PT	FT	PT
Men								
15–19	18	46	4	18	43	37	13	29
20–4	17	57	4	19	18	49	3	14
25–9	10	56	2	13	11	54	2	14
30–54	6	57	1	15	5	58	1	10
55–9	11	39	5	22	3	63	[a]	12
60+	19	35	13	24	3	54	1	14
Women								
15–19	24	39	8	19	52	37	20	32
20–4	20	54	4	19	22	47	5	22
25–9	14	43	2	13	15	40	3	11
30–54	9	18	2	3	10	13	1	4
55–9	20	18	9	10	11	8	1	2
60+	27	25	19	19	10	8	4	1
All men	9	50	3	17	9	45	2	21
All women	13	27	3	9	15	21	3	11
All persons	11	33	3	12	11	28	2	14

Notes: [a]less than 0.5%. FT: employers and employees working over 30 hours a week. PT: employees working less than 30 hours a week. LF: labour force (workforce in employment plus unemployed).

Source: Danish IDA database (Integrated Database for Labour Market Research) from Danmarks Statistik. Data on labour-market position in November 1988 and November 1989 for a 2.5% random sample from the database which covers the entire Danish adult population, that is, 9/365 of 5.1 million population.

Results for Britain are also repeated, to a greater or lesser extent, in other industrial societies (Table 9). A European Commission report (1994) shows that Britain's 50 per cent sex differential in labour mobility is typical of the European Community as a whole, even though labour mobility in Britain is above the Community average, along with Spain, Denmark, the Netherlands, Ireland, and France, in contrast with the lowest mobility rates found in Germany (European Commission, 1994: 86–7, 97–9). Periodic OECD reports on employment stability and job tenure (OECD, 1984, 1989, 1993) show substantial sex differentials in job tenure in all industrialized societies, with the exception of France, where the differential had almost disappeared by 1991 (Table 9) and Denmark, as we have already seen (Table 8). Typically, average job tenure for men is 50 per cent higher than for women, but it was 141 per cent higher in the Netherlands and 171 per cent higher in Luxembourg in 1972 (Table 9). The OECD reports also indicate that the sex differential has generally been falling in the two decades up to 1991, with minor changes or substantial falls depending on the country. The Netherlands seems to have had the largest fall, with male average tenure two-and-a-half times that for women in 1972 falling to twice the average female tenure by 1991. In contrast, the UK had one of the smallest falls: average tenure for men was 50 per cent higher than for women in 1979; the gap had fallen to 46 per cent by 1991 after a decade of historically high levels of unemployment, which depressed turnover rates temporarily rather than permanently as noted above (Table 4). However the sex differential is largest for the longest tenures, such as 10 years or more with an employer (OECD, 1989: 187), which is the category that counts most for promotion opportunities and earnings.

Average job tenure is calculated from survey data on current jobs in progress, and hence refers strictly to average uncompleted tenures of jobs in progress. For example in 1991 average job tenure in Britain was 7.9 years, with Japan and the USA representing the more extreme averages of 10.9 and 6.7 years (Table 9). Main (1981) and Burgess and Rees (1994) have

Table 9. *Enterprise tenure in OECD countries 1972–1991*

Country	Year data refer to	% with each tenure		Average job tenure (years)		
		< 1 year	> 10 years	Men	Women	All
Norway	1991	—	—	10.2	8.4	9.4
Finland	1986	19	40	—	—	—
	1991	12	—	9.4	8.5	9.0
Germany	1972	—	—	8.9	5.7	8.5
	1991	13	—	12.1	8.0	10.4
France	1978	—	35	9.7	7.2	8.8
	1986 Men	12	47	—	—	—
	1986 Women	13	41	—	—	—
	1991	16	—	10.6	9.6	10.1
Belgium	1972	—	—	8.7	5.6	8.0
Netherlands	1972	—	—	8.9	3.7	8.2
	1991	24	—	8.6	4.3	7.0
Luxembourg	1972	—	35	10.3	3.8	9.9
UK	1979	—	31	9.6	6.4	8.6
	1986 Men	15	38	—	—	—
	1986 Women	22	22	—	—	—
	1991	19	—	9.2	6.3	7.9
Italy	1972	—	—	7.4	6.6	7.1
Switzerland	1991	—	—	10.4	6.6	8.8
USA	1983	—	27	8.4	5.6	7.2
	1987 Men	26	31	—	—	—
	1987 Women	32	21	—	—	—
	1991	29	—	7.5	5.9	6.7
Canada	1983	—	27	8.6	5.8	7.5
	1986 Men	25	32	—	—	—
	1986 Women	30	20	—	—	—
	1991	24	—	8.9	6.5	7.8
Australia	1981	—	19	7.0	4.7	6.3
	1987 Men	23	30	—	—	—
	1987 Women	29	16	—	—	—
	1991	21	—	7.8	5.4	6.8
Japan	1982	—	48	13.5	8.8	11.7
	1987 Men	9	54	—	—	—
	1987 Women	17	29	—	—	—
	1991	10	—	12.5	7.3	10.9

Note: Data not available for all countries for all years.
Sources: OECD (1993), Tables 4.1 and 4.2; OECD (1989), Tables 5.13 and 5.14; OECD (1984), Table 31.

shown that the average completed length of a job is roughly double the average length of a job derived from ordinary job tenure data (such as that collected in the LFS and GHS): 20 years for men and 12 years for women full-time employees in the early 1970s; 18 years for men and 12 years for women employees in 1990. However, they show that the sex differential is much the same in both measures. Thus the average job tenures shown in Table 9 provide reliable measures of sex differentials, even if they underestimate the completed tenures for all workers.

Labour-force mobility: flows into and out of the labour force

The regular statistical surveys measure employment continuity and labour mobility in relation to the current employer only, over relatively short periods of months or years. Longitudinal data allow us to measure labour mobility and employment continuity over the longer time horizon of decades or the entire life-cycle, disregarding the question of whether the employee worked for only one or for many employers. People who leave one employer simply to change to another job are still continuously employed. In this and the following section we examine first, labour mobility, and then employment stability within the wider labour market rather than in relation to a particular employer. In this section we examine flows into and out of the labour force. In the next, we look at the obverse of mobility, continuity of employment (or cumulative work experience) over the life-cycle. Unlike men, women have spells out of the labour force, sometimes long periods devoted to domestic activities rather than just short breaks between jobs. It is often assumed that with women's increasing labour-force attachment, the number and length of such breaks have fallen, so that women now resemble men in continuity of employment across the life-cycle. What in fact emerges from the analyses is that sex differentials in labour market behaviour are very much larger in this broader view than is revealed by the narrow focus of measures of turnover and tenure with the current employer. The standard measures have hidden more than they revealed.

Analyses of the British 1% Longitudinal Study (LS)[10] reveal dramatic sex differentials in movement in and out of the labour force over a one-year period (Table 10) and over a decade (Tables 11 and 12). Equally dramatic sex differentials in labour-force entries and exits are reported for the USA, especially among prime-age workers (aged 25–50 years) whether using population census data (Table 13) or work-life estimates (Table 14). Flows into and out of employment over a one-year period are smaller in aggregate data for the European Community, but the sex differential has remained unchanged since at least the early 1980s (European Commission, 1994: 85).

Detailed analyses (not shown) confirm that the sex differential in labour mobility revealed in Tables 10–12 does not reduce to other mediating factors, and that the difference between full-timers and part-timers is largely attributable to the sex differential. Movement in and out of the British workforce is twice as high among women as among men over a decade, and two to four times higher over one year. Although women constitute less than half the workforce, they account for the majority of movements into and out of the workforce. Labour-force mobility is not influenced by the type of job held. Men in male-dominated, female-dominated and integrated occupations[11] display the same unvarying entry and exit rate to and from the workforce. Women in male-dominated, female-dominated and integrated occupations all show the same unvarying entry and exit rate to and from the workforce. Among prime age workers, age does not affect workforce exit rates for men, and has only a small effect on exit rates for women, which decline slightly as women grow older. Differences between full-time and part-time workers, both among new entrants to the workforce and among people leaving the workforce, are attributable almost entirely to the persistent sex differential in labour mobility, which is as strong among full-time workers as among part-time workers.[12] Women working full-time are twice as likely to exit the workforce over a decade as men working full-time. Entry to part-time jobs is four times higher than entry to full-time jobs over the 12 months 1970–1, largely because female (re-)entrants outnumber male (re-)entrants. Similar results are obtained from the LFS towards the end of the 1980s.[13] The overwhelming importance of the sex differential in Tables 10–12 persists after controls for age and type of occupation are added to the analyses.[14]

Table 10. *Flows into the workforce and occupational change over one year 1970–1*

	Proportion (%) of each group entering the 1971 workforce within the preceding twelve months	Base N=000s	Proportion (%) of those working in 1970 and 1971 who changed occupation within the year	Base 000s
All working in spring 1971	6	239	6	216
All men	3	152	6	141
working full-time in 1971	3	149	6	139
working part-time	7	3	9	2
All women	11	87	6	75
working full-time in 1971	8	59	6	52
working part-time	16	28	4	23
All working full-time	4	208	6	191
All working part-time	15	31	5	25
Male entries to				
male occupations	3	108	6	101
integrated occupations	3	25	7	23
female occupations	5	19	6	18
Female entries to				
male occupations	9	8	7	7
integrated occupations	9	14	6	11
female occupations	11	66	5	57

Note: *Male occupations* are those with <25% female workers; *integrated occupations* are those with 25%–55% female workers; *female occupations* are those with >55% female workers.

Source: 1971 Census data within the 1% LS, England and Wales, data for people in work in 1971 aged 16 and over.

Table 11. *Workforce entries and exits 1971–1981: comparison of full-time and part-time jobs*

	Men	Women	All
A. Entries to the workforce over the decade 1971–81 as % of people working in 1981			
People working full-time in 1981	26	55	34
People working part-time in 1981	17	48	45
All working in 1981	25	52	36
B. Exits from the workforce over the decade 1971–81 as % of people working in 1971			
People working full-time in 1971	23	47	30
People working part-time in 1971	54	46	47
All working in 1971	24	47	33

Source: 1971 and 1981 Census data within the 1% LS, England and Wales. Data for people in work in 1971 or 1981 aged 16 and over, including entrants to labour force from education and exits from labour force to retirement.

Similar analyses for prime-age workers in the USA (Tables 13 and 14) show women to be two to five times more likely than men to enter or leave the labour force. Sex differentials are smallest among people retiring and among young workers aged under 25 years who are the subject of intensive research in the USA.

There is little or no sex differential in the propensity to change occupation and/or employer in Britain (Table 10; see also Department of

Table 12. *Flows into and out of the workforce over the decade 1971–1981*

	Men	Women	All
Entries to 1981 workforce:			
as % of 1981 male or female workforce	25	52	—
as % of total 1981 workforce	15	21	36
Exits from 1971 workforce			
as % of 1971 male or female workforce	24	47	—
as % of total 1971 workforce	15	17	32
Continuous employment			
as % of 1981 male or female workforce	75	48	—
as % of total 1981 workforce	45	19	64
Continuous full-time employment			
as % of 1981 male or female workforce	72	22	—
as % of total 1981 workforce	43	9	52
1971 workforce (000s)	122	74	196
1981 workforce (000s)	124	82	206
Entries to 1981 workforce (000s)	32	43	73
Continuous employment 1971–81 (000s)	92	39	133
Continuous full-time employment (000s)	89	18	107
Exits from 1971 workforce (000s)	30	35	64

Source: 1971 and 1981 Census data within the 1% LS, England and Wales. Data for people in work in 1971 or 1981 aged 16 and over, including entrants to labour force from education and exits from labour force to retirement.

Table 13. *Flows into and out of the labour force by sex and age, USA, 1965–70*

A. People entering labour force over 5 years 1965–70 as % of all employed in 1970, by age in 1970

	Total	21–4	25–34	35–44	45–54	55–64	65+ years
Men	12	51	13	5	5	6	13
Women	36	71	44	37	25	18	22

B. People leaving labour force over 5 years 1965–70 as % of all employed in 1965, by age in 1965

	Total	16–19	20–9	30–9	40–9	50–9	60+ years
Men	8	8	3	2	4	11	35
Women	26	39	36	18	15	21	40

Note: All percentages have been rounded.

Source: Extracted from Tables 11.1 and 11.2 in Treiman (1985: 219–20) which were adapted from Tables 1 and 2 in Sommers and Eck (1977) reporting analyses of the 1970 USA Population Census.

Employment 1991: Table 3) or the USA (Treiman, 1985: 219; Markey and Parks, 1989: 6–7), so higher mobility among women consists entirely of more frequent movement in and out of the labour force. Taken together, these results tend to invalidate the theory that high female turnover rates are exclusively a feature of segregated occupations or jobs women do rather than a characteristic of the incumbents. It is women *per se* who have higher labour mobility than men, rather than female-

Table 14. *Rates of labour-force entry and exit over the life-cycle in the USA, 1977*

	Entries to labour force as % of population		Exits from labour force as % of population		Exits from labour force as % of labour force	
	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women
16–19	21	21	12	13	25	29
20–4	14	16	9	14	13	23
25–9	5	11	4	12	4	18
30–4	2	9	2	8	2	13
35–9	2	8	2	7	2	11
40–4	2	7	2	7	2	11
45–9	2	6	3	7	3	11
50–4	2	5	4	6	4	11
55–9	2	4	6	7	7	14
60–4	3	3	11	8	21	25
65–9	4	3	9	5	38	37

Note: All percentages have been rounded.
Source: Derived from Smith (1982: 18–19), Tables 5 and 6 presenting mobility rates from worklife estimates.

dominated occupations being specially organized by employers so as to produce artificially high job turnover rates. Men in female-dominated occupations have the same labour-force mobility rates as men generally, and women in male-dominated occupations have the same mobility rates as working women generally. It would seem more appropriate in future to say that employers have adapted to the inevitability of female labour mobility being two to four times higher than among male workers, irrespective of the degree and pattern of occupational segregation, with part-time jobs simply displaying the trend most sharply. Another conclusion is that equal opportunities policies ensure that women's much greater propensity to be intermittent workers does not prevent them holding jobs across the whole range of occupations and types of work in the labour market. However, women accumulate less work experience than men, and they are less likely to accumulate the firm-specific experience that is important for promotion within internal labour markets, with important consequences for vertical occupational segregation and the sex differential in earnings.

Continuity of employment over the life-cycle

As yet, no standard classifications or measures of continuity of employment have been adopted for longitudinal data. Measures of employment continuity variously refer to any paid work within each year of a sequence of years; over six months' work (full-time or part-time) within each year of a defined period; or continuous year-round full-time employment across periods of decades. Clearly, the more stringent the measure, the lower the degree of continuous employment observed among women. For men, continuous employment consists universally of year-round full-time work, so the same definition should be adopted to examine sex differentials, but data-sets do not always allow this. When they do, huge sex differentials are revealed. For example PSID data for the adult population in the USA show only 6 per cent of women compared to 64 per cent of men were in continuous full-time employment over the 13-year period 1968–80 (Treiman, 1985: 218). Using a much looser definition, the NLS data on women aged 30–44 years in 1967 showed that 14 per cent had been almost continuously employed (full-time or part-time) in every year since completing their education (Maret, 1983: 51).

In order to collapse the complex analyses applied to work histories into a theoretically meaningful framework that permits comparisons across men and women, across time and countries, we have developed a three-category classification of employment profiles which takes account of NLS research findings on women's career plans (Hakim, 1991: 112): continuous employment, the homemaker career, and discontinuous employment.[15] If sex differentials are disappearing, continuous employment should be replacing the homemaker career among women.

Continuous employment or stable activity is the stereotypical male employment profile, consisting of continuous employment throughout adult life, from the time of leaving full-time education to retirement. Strictly speaking, this should be labelled

continuous economic activity, to allow for spells of unemployment. Given the practical difficulties of differentiating between unemployment and other non-working statuses among women in Britain (Cragg and Dawson, 1984; Martin and Roberts, 1984: 79–95), researchers have adopted the alternative strategy of looking at periods in or out of employment (Elias and Main, 1982: 8; Main, 1988*a*: 24). On this basis, 80 per cent of British men have had only one period of continuous employment, albeit in different jobs. If periods of unemployment are ignored, virtually all men are economically active throughout their working-age lives (Elias and Main, 1982: 10). The stereotype of the male employment profile is based on reality. Whether they choose it or not, this profile is imposed on men. A minority of women (around one-quarter) plan a career in market work irrespective of developments in their private life (Hakim, 1991: 112) and, as Rexroat (1992) shows, long-term workplans override marital status as a determinant of continuous employment. The question is whether this profile has become dominant among women in recent decades in Europe. It may already be the dominant pattern in the USA.[16]

The *homemaker career* or stable inactivity is the stereotypical female employment profile in Western industrial societies, consisting of a single period of continuous employment (if any) after leaving full-time education which ends in early adult life and is never resumed. Permanent cessation of employment may be prompted by marriage or by childbirth, but it is anticipated long before the event and involves a qualitatively different perspective on investment in educational qualifications, not necessarily a lower investment, as some human-capital theorists argue. Higher educational qualifications may be acquired to ensure a girl marries a partner of at least equal status rather than with a view to acquiring marketable skills for long-term employment. The returns to education in this group consist of the husband's earning potential rather than personal earnings potential. The popularity of apparently non-vocational degrees in the humanities among young women in Western societies is attributable to these subjects being positively appropriate for the homemaker career. In developing countries, a wider range of subjects serve the same 'intellectual dowry' purpose. For some women termination of market work acknowledges an efficient household division of labour along lines theorized by Becker (1991); for others, it also signifies their incorporation into their spouse's two-person career (Finch, 1983; see also Maret, 1983: 112, 115). The homemaker career is open to men, in principle, although it remains a rarity even among 'post-modern' men in Western industrial society. In recent decades the homemaker career has been the ideal held by the majority of girls, especially working-class girls, in Britain and by a substantial proportion of one-third to two-thirds of women generally in Western industrial society (Pollert, 1981: 91–115; Hakim, 1991: 112; Vogler, 1994: 55), even though some writers pretend it does not exist (Dex, 1985: 20–46). In some European societies, such as Germany, this model of the family division of labour provides the basis for social welfare and labour legislation; in other countries, such as Finland, this is not the case (Pfau-Effinger, 1993). Fiscal and social policies can sharply reduce the numbers adopting this career choice, as illustrated by Sweden (OECD, 1994: 61). This profile should be disappearing among women.[17]

The third category in our classification is the intermediate category of *discontinuous or intermittent employment* or fragmented activity, consisting of work histories with periods of employment broken by domestic breaks or other periods of non-work other than involuntary unemployment. This group includes the simplest M-shaped work profile of two long spells of continuous employment broken by a single long domestic break as well as 'marginal' and 'sporadic' workers whose employment is interrupted by several periods out of the labour market (Elias and Main, 1982: 11; Maret, 1983: 51). The NLS results suggest this group includes drifters with no defined objectives as well as unplanned employment careers (Maret, 1983; Hakim, 1991: 112). Fragmented work histories are typical of secondary earners, who may trivialize their earnings so as not to challenge the male breadwinner role (Zelizer, 1989). Longitudinal studies in the USA show that the percentage of a married woman's life spent in employment is U-shaped, with high concentrations in the lowest and highest deciles, that is, in continuous employment and continuous non-work (Goldin, 1989: 25). However, discontinuous employment still accounts for the majority of women: around half of American women aged 30–44 years in 1967 (Stephan and Schroeder, 1979: 130; Maret,

1983: 54). Deregulation of the labour market and the expansion of 'flexibility' in the workforce in the 1980s has allowed this category to expand in size in recent years in Europe, among men and women (Boyer, 1989; Hakim, 1990). But this recent trend would not be important in the surveys examined here, which report on employment profiles before 1980.

It is notable that there is in practice only one 'choice' of work history for men, compared with three for women. Feminists who emphasize that women's choices are constrained and not 'completely free' overlook the fact that women have more choices than men.

Contrary to received opinion, examination of the evidence shows clearly that there has been no increase in continuous employment among British women in the post-war period. The dominant trend is in fact a massive increase in discontinuous employment (Table 15, Figures 1 and 2). It is perhaps most significant that the simple three-phase broken work profile has declined in importance, replaced by an expanding marginal workforce of women with increasingly numerous breaks in employment, shorter periods of employment, and more numerous job changes, often associated with part-time work. These results have been largely hidden in research reports which choose to emphasize women's increasing 'attachment' to the labour force across the life-cycle rather than the fact that participation in market work has become fragmented and is now even more likely to be contingent on and subordinate to non-market activities than in the past (Elias and Main, 1982; Stewart and Greenhalgh, 1984; Dex, 1987; Main, 1988*a*; Jacobs, 1995*a*).

The relative importance of the three work profiles is best identified at age 40–9, when we obtain a picture close to completed work profiles and before the picture is clouded by early retirement after the age of 50. Analyses of the 1980 Women and Employment Survey presented in Table 15 and Figures 1 and 2 separate cohort effects from life-cycle effects, showing women's employment profiles at about age 40 years. Main (1988*a*) shows that only 3 per cent of women aged 40 had been continuously employed by 1980, a smaller proportion than in previous cohorts (Figures 1 and 2).[18] Main also shows that the frequency of breaks in employment has been increasing across age cohorts, so that the proportion of potential working life spent out of the labour force also increased across age cohorts (Main, 1988*a*: 28–41). As a result, the typical employed woman now has a less intensive record of employment than she did a few decades ago (Main, 1988*a*:

Table 15. *The decline in continuous employment and the marriage career*

Year of labour-market entry	Proportion (%) of each cohort in each group 15/20 years after entering workforce							
	continuous employment		homemaker career		discontinuous employment		Base=100%	
	15	20	15	20	15	20	15	20
1941–5	20	13	44	36	36	51	511	502
1946–50	18	13	43	31	39	56	449	433
1951–5	15	10	38	23	47	67	523	510
1956–60	11	8	36	19	53	73	609	574
1961–5	13	*	26	*	61	*	655	*
TOTAL	15	11	37	27	48	62	2747	2019

Note: Continuous employment consists of continuous spells of paid work (whether full-time or part-time) without any breaks. The homemaker career is defined as a single employment spell early in adult life that ended in permanent non-work. Discontinuous employment consists of all other work histories combining spells of work and spells of non-work. *sample too young for results at 20 years stage in 1980 survey.

Source: 1980 Women and Employment Survey, Great Britain, data for women aged 16–59 in 1980.

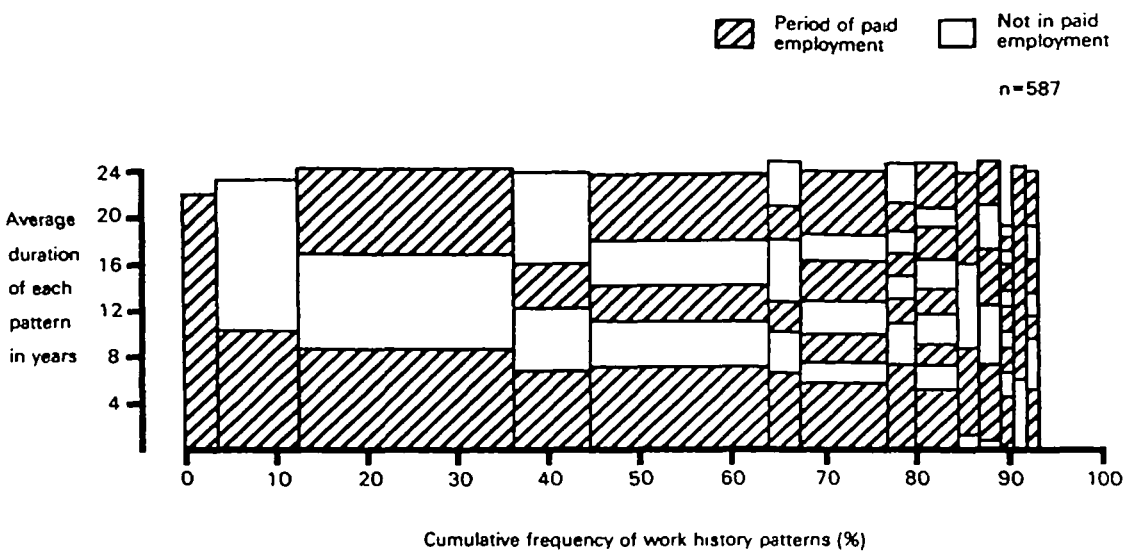
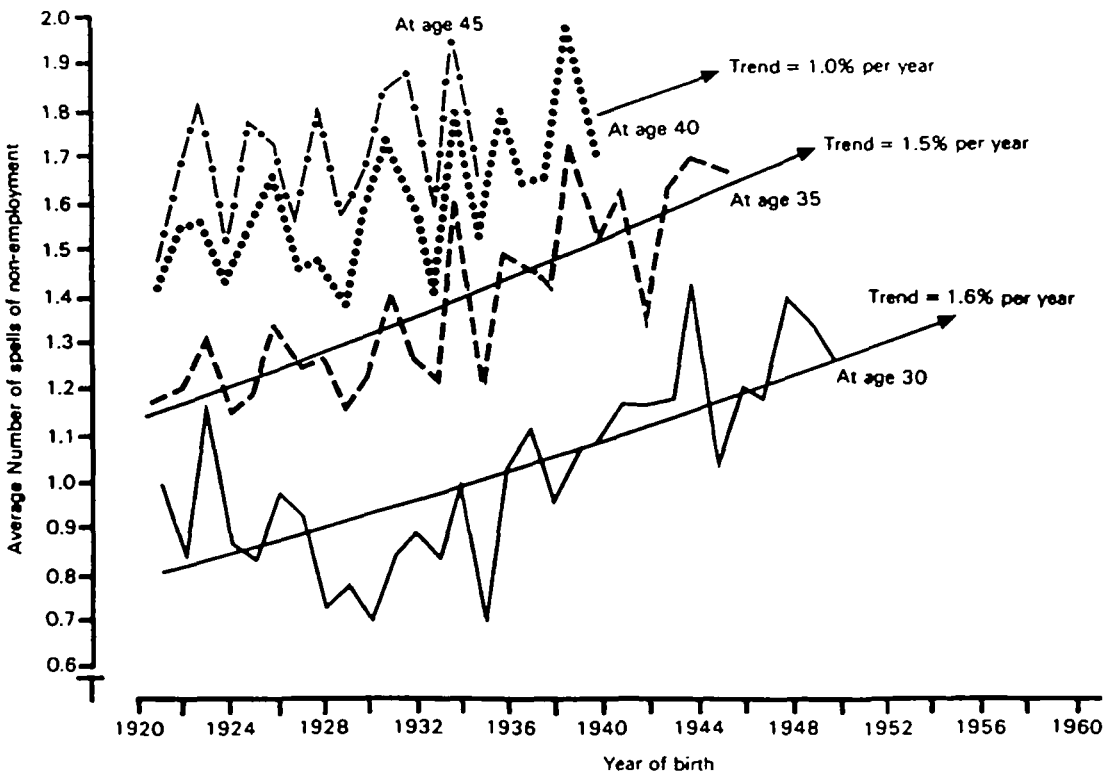


Figure 1. *Distribution of work history patterns at age 40, women aged 40–44 years in 1980*



Note: only spells 'out of labour force' of at least 3 months are included. There is no significant trend in the number of spells for women at age 45.
Source: Main (1988a), Figures 2.6 and 2.10 based on analyses of the 1980 Women and Employment Survey, data for women aged 16–59 in 1980 in Great Britain.

Figure 2. *Average number of spells 'out of the labour force' for respondents who are in employment at a given age, by year of birth*

42), a finding consistent with the results of earlier studies (Hunt, 1968*b*: 121; Elias and Main, 1982: 30–1; Stewart and Greenhalgh, 1984: 495–9). For example, 15 per cent of women aged 45–59 in 1965 had always worked (calculated from Table D4c in Hunt, 1968*b*: 121) compared with less than 10 per cent in 1980 (Table 15). Both Main (1988*b*: 117–18) and Elias (1988) note an association between women's discontinuous employment patterns and part-time work in Britain, despite the fact that most part-time jobs are permanent. Finally, very similar results are obtained from the 1986 SCELI data, despite its less than national coverage (Jacobs, 1995*a*; Mills, 1995).

Discontinuous employment has expanded in absolute and relative terms, at the expense of continuous employment and the homemaking career (Table 15). The result is a large substitution of fragmented employment for continuous employment in the female workforce in the post-war decades, in parallel with the massive substitution of part-time jobs for full-time jobs already documented by Hakim (1993*a*) for Britain and by Jonung and Persson (1993) for Sweden.[19] This finding for Britain has certain similarities with Goldin's (1989, 1990) conclusion that the large post-war influx of women into the US labour force resulted in a lowering of average years of work experience among working women. Goldin used this finding to explain the lack of change in women's relative earnings and the continuing sex differential in pay. We conclude that increasingly fragmented employment profiles can explain why sex differentials in labour mobility and job tenure have been maintained in recent decades, and can contribute an important part of the explanation for a relatively slow decline in levels of occupational segregation and in the sex differential in earnings (Polachek, 1979; Zabalza and Arrufat, 1985; Main, 1988*b*: 118; Hakim, 1992). Even the most recent US studies claim only that women's work experience averages three-quarters of men's work experience, measured in years (Reskin and Padavic, 1994: 41), an average that conceals significant differences between working and non-working women and overlooks the fact that women are far less likely than men to work full-time throughout the year in any given year of employment (Smith, 1982; Maret, 1983: 54; Goldin, 1990: 31). Estimates of annual hours in the USA reveal that women's average annual work hours are only half those of men despite the fact that women appear to contribute equally to the workforce on a headcount basis (calculated from Table 4 in Smith, 1983: 17). The sex differential is substantially larger in Britain, even ignoring the greater importance of years with only part-time and/or part-year employment.[20]

It is thus simply not true that sex differentials in employment patterns are small or declining. Significant and continuing differentials are revealed by the standard measures, and huge differentials are revealed by wider measures of labour-force mobility and employment continuity. Women generally have not yet begun to attain the male profile of continuous lifelong employment, and are even moving away from this profile in Britain. The theoretical and methodological implications of this must now be addressed.

Methodological and conceptual implications

The key methodological implication of the continuing sex differential in labour mobility is that incorporating women into labour-market analyses is not quite as simple as many assume, if the analysis attempts anything more than single-time cross-sectional comparisons. For longitudinal labour-market analysis, women are significantly different, and a lot more trouble for the data analyst as well as the theoretician.

Male labour-force participation is sufficiently continuous for there to be no major discrepancy between gross and net change in the workforce,[21] even over long stretches of time. Female labour-force participation exhibits a high degree of 'churning', so that the female workforce at time 1 may look identical to the workforce one year or ten years later at time 2, but will consist of a substantially different group of people. Longitudinal analysis presents comparisons at the individual level of people's experiences or statuses at time 1 and time 2, so it is necessarily restricted to people who are in the labour market at both points in time. Unfortunately, women who are continuously employed are an unrepresentative minority of all working women and a tiny minority of all adult

women. This poses both substantive and methodological problems.

Problems remain substantial even when the definition of continuous employment is relaxed. The 1% LS only identifies employment status at decennial censuses, so the definition of continuous employment for longitudinal analyses has to be widened to anyone employed at the start and end of a decade. Even on this looser definition, continuously employed women are an unrepresentative minority (Table 12). Over a period of a decade, one-third of the workforce will be new entrants and another third will leave it—but women dominate both groups, even though they are a minority of the whole labour force. Over a ten-year period, only two-thirds of the workforce remains continuously employed, but this represents three-quarters of men and only half of women in work at the start or end of the decade. Women constitute just under half of the total workforce, but they are less than one-third of the continuously employed workforce. Continuously employed men are a representative subgroup of all men working at a single point in time. Continuously employed women are a distinctively unusual minority who are not representative of all women in the labour market in any single year, and women in continuous full-time work are exceptionally rare (Table 12). Longitudinal analysis is clearly possible for women, but only for an unrepresentative minority. If one wants to ensure that a longitudinal analysis covers a representative sample of women, the entire conceptual framework has to be recast to take account of the homemaker career as well as fragmented employment profiles.

Similarly analyses which take change events or transitions as the unit of analysis will have to consider how women's higher mobility affects the results, and whether the 'sample' of change events for women relates to an unrepresentative subgroup of women in exactly the same way as women experiencing little or no mobility are an unrepresentative subgroup. The polarization of women's employment patterns means that there is no 'typical' female workforce for comparison with the average male workforce, and in any longitudinal analysis one has to choose whether to focus on the minority of continuously employed women or the majority of discontinuously employed women who are self-evidently unlike men. It also means that results are somewhat predictable, with low or declining sex differentials in the continuous workforce and at the top of the occupational hierarchy, and continuing high sex differentials among intermittent workers and at the bottom of the occupational hierarchy. In either case repeating an analysis for women will pose issues that have to be addressed afresh. This is not to excuse or justify excluding women from longitudinal analyses, on the grounds of excessive complexity. But the resource implications of repeating an analysis for women are not trivial.

Comparative work and trend analysis would be greatly facilitated by a standard classification of labour-market profiles across the life-cycle that can meaningfully capture changing patterns of female (and male) employment and can be applied cross-nationally. The classification offered above identifying three main employment profiles is arguably more practical as well as more theoretically meaningful than the quantitative measure proposed, for example, by Maret (1983). The key definitional issue that needs further attention is the operational definition of continuous employment, or economic activity. Some studies ignore periods of unemployment or non-work shorter than three months or six months; others ignore periods out of the labour force shorter than 12 months, simply because of the way the work-history data were collected and coded; other studies fail to distinguish years of full-time employment from years of part-time and/or part-year employment. It seems essential to distinguish continuous full-time employment as found in male work histories, yet this is rare. The most promising approach is a new classification of *stable actives*, *stable inactives*, and *unstable actives* which describes patterns of market work and job search over a year rather than in a single reference week (Clogg *et al.*, 1990). The classification is a refinement of the simpler classification used for many decades in the Current Population Survey (CPS) of the USA (Mellor and Parks, 1988; Hakim, 1993*a*: 111; Horrigan and Markey, 1990: 12), which differentiates full-time year-round workers, people not working at all over the past year, and people working part-time and/or part-year. The category of unstable actives, or intermittent workers, combines the notion of 'marginal work' in the sense of small and casual jobs totalling

few annual hours that are often omitted from survey counts (Hakim, 1989*b*; European Commission, 1994: 87, 106–16) and 'marginally active' workers in the other sense of people on the edge of the labour market who may not actively look for work in a given week but would take a job if one became available or were offered, including discouraged workers (Department of Employment, 1986; European Commission, 1991: 55), along with part-time and temporary workers. Clogg *et al.*'s results with the refined classification broadly duplicate those based on the simpler CPS classification (Mellor and Parks, 1988; Hakim, 1993*a*: 111), but they are surprised by the size and stability of the intermittent workforce in the USA: 32 per cent of all adults of working age (29 per cent of men and 33 per cent of women) as compared with the stable core workforce: 38 per cent of adults of working age (51 per cent of men and 26 per cent of women) in March 1992. This classification can be applied to the entire adult population of working age, forcing data analysts to deal with substantive implications of sample selection bias or censoring that are often sidestepped in analyses based on the stable core workforce (Clogg *et al.*, 1990: 1558–73).

The assumption of an essentially homogenous adult female population underlies statistical techniques for extrapolating results for an observed subgroup to unobserved subgroups, to 'test' for the effect of a variable unique to one subgroup or to control for unobserved heterogeneity (as illustrated in Main, 1988*b*: 112–16). Sometimes this is legitimate. Thus it makes sense to argue that the female workforce could have the same turnover rate as the male workforce if it had the same age structure — since we all grow older with time, like it or not. But it does not make the same sense to state that the female workforce would have the same degree of employment stability if it had the same occupational structure as men, even if artefactual results of this nature can be produced by modelling techniques and statistical 'experiments'. This is to ignore the complex array of factors (observed and unobserved) that produces the different occupational composition of the male and female workforces, and their links to work orientations, employment patterns and work histories. Modelling and simulation techniques can all too readily be applied to produce artefactual 'results' that are theoretical nonsense, in that they manipulate a single variable outside its complex surrounding causal context, implying that it is possible for one factor to be changed independently of all the other social factors with which it is bound up. The distinctions between the three employment profiles described earlier are a question of degree only at the margins. They are otherwise qualitatively different, as well as reflecting theoretically important differences in the place of market work in people's lives. It will rarely be appropriate to pretend that research results obtained for one subgroup can be extrapolated to the other two, or that the sample selection bias of an analysis focused on one group can be overcome by technical solutions.

Theoretical implications

The key argument here is that the three types of work history are substantively and theoretically distinct rather than labels for points on a continuum, and that women can no longer be treated as a single homogeneous group in the labour market despite internal variations. A powerful piece of evidence concerns the implications of women's labour mobility for their life chances, taken literally. A paper by Harrop and Joshi (1994) based on the 1% LS looks at women continuously employed in a particular occupation in order to study differentials in occupational mortality rates. When women were classified to occupational classes on the basis of their own jobs, mortality rates did not show the marked differentials commonly found among men. Sharp differences in mortality emerged only among the minority of women working full-time in 1971 who worked continuously in the same occupation until 1981.[22] This sub-group of occupationally stable continuous workers constitutes only one-third of women working full-time in 1971, so it is clearly not representative of the female workforce. And it is only this subgroup, which approximates to the male employment profile, which exhibits the occupational differentials in health and mortality that are typical of men. The greater relative autonomy and independence of wives who work full-time rather than part-time (or not at all) is also reflected in qualitatively different voting patterns in a study by Mills (1994) although Roberts and Marshall (1995)

obtained far weaker results. This suggests that it only makes sense to classify women to social classes on the basis of their own jobs if they are in continuous full-time employment for most of their adult lives.[23] It confirms that women who work continuously are not only statistically unrepresentative of all working women, they are also a qualitatively different group requiring substantively different treatment in analysis. The difference between continuous workers and intermittent workers is one of degree at the margin, in terms of the precise measures and cut-off points used to differentiate the two groups in a data set. But it is also a difference of theoretical and substantive significance which has so far been overlooked in analyses which treat the female workforce as essentially homogeneous rather than polarized.

The current emphasis on the expansion of part-time work in Europe has perhaps led to underestimation of employment profiles and labour mobility patterns as even more important determinants of occupational grade and earnings (Main, 1988*b*), and to scholars overlooking the significance of the sex differential in employment patterns as compared with the occupations held by men and women (Polachek, 1979). There is a wealth of research for Britain and the USA showing that job tenure and total work experience are key determinants of earnings which help explain the pay gap.

In the period 1975–9 sex differences in job tenure accounted for 6 per cent of the pay gap in Britain (Sloane, 1990; 150–5). The cumulative total years of work experience with all employers has a stronger impact on earnings. Zabalza and Arrufat (1985) showed that in Britain two-thirds of the difference in average hourly earnings between married men and married women could be explained by differences in their work histories. Main (1988*b*: 118) found that discontinuous employment was a more important determinant of earnings than the more commonly measured part-time status. Rubery and Fagan (1994: 127–31) note that women's interrupted careers and higher turnover rates affect their earnings. In the USA Sandell and Shapiro (1980) and O'Neill (1985) show that both firm-specific experience, measured by tenure with the current employer, and total work experience are important determinants of female earnings, earnings growth, and movements in the male–female pay gap. Sandell and Shapiro also suggest that job tenure is more important for women who have not had long-term workplans and have therefore not invested in general education and training. O'Neill and Polachek (1993) find that convergence in measurable education and work experience, including a small decline in female labour turnover, explains one-third to one-half of the narrowing of the pay gap in the USA in the 1980s. Interestingly, an increase in women's work experience mattered more than a decline in occupational segregation during the 1980s, suggesting a reassessment of the relative importance of occupational segregation and employment profiles in explaining the pay gap. Goldin and Polachek (1987), Goldin (1989, 1990: 73), Sorensen (1989), Wood *et al.* (1993), Kilbourne *et al.* (1994) and Wellington (1994) all show that sex differentials in job tenure and cumulative work experience explain a large part of the (narrowing of the) pay gap.[24]

There has been a theoretical strand in neoclassical economics arguing that one cause of occupational segregation patterns is women's propensity to choose occupations that fit in with their anticipated family role and do not penalize them for spells out of the labour market (Reskin and Roos, 1990: 38). The thesis assumes women can predict their actual, as opposed to their preferred marriage, fertility and work patterns over the life-cycle, but there is evidence that many women find reality does not match their plans (Sandell and Shapiro, 1980). The idea also assumes an exceptional degree of forward planning among discontinuous workers, the very group that is least likely to plan ahead, with many drifters and unplanned careers. Our analysis of labour-force mobility (Tables 10–12) shows that women's labour mobility is affected by their family roles, but does not determine their choice of occupation. Mobility rates varied between men and women, but remained at a constant level across female-dominated, male-dominated and integrated occupations. It is perhaps a tribute to equal opportunities legislation that women's high turnover rates have not restricted their access to male jobs. These results are consistent with US studies concluding that there is no special compatibility between female-dominated occupations and parenthood (Desai and Waite, 1991; Glass and Camarigg, 1992;

Rexroat, 1992). However, job convenience factors do affect the work decisions of young mothers with low work commitment (those who plan to be full-time homemakers at age 35 rather than in employment), whereas convenience factors do not affect the work decisions of young women in their 20s with high work commitment who plan to be working in their 30s (Desai and Waite, 1991: 562). The clerical and service jobs and small firms which employ most women also have the highest compatibility scores (Glass and Camarigg, 1992: 142, 146). So the theory may yet prove to have some validity, if we make sharper distinctions between subgroups among women.

Social scientists in the USA, particularly economists, are sensitive to heterogeneity in the adult female (working) population, are aware of the ensuing problems of sample selection bias and of the misleading notion of the 'representative' or 'average' woman, and sometimes seek to correct for selection bias (Heckman and Willis, 1977; Heckman, 1979; Lloyd *et al.*, 1979: 66, 121, 234–6; Berk, 1983; Maret, 1983: 53–8; Corcoran *et al.*, 1984: 181, 186; O'Neill, 1985: 95, 103, 112; Zabalza and Arrufat, 1985: 72–5, 87–8, 95; Killingsworth and Heckman, 1986: 180–1; Goldin, 1989, 1990: 29–35; Desai and Waite, 1991: 555, 558, 564; Glass and Camarigg, 1992: 143; Kilbourne *et al.*, 1994: 707; Wellington, 1994: 840–1). However, studies that focus on working women, women working continuously, or women working full-time are not always able to eliminate the substantive bias of excluding other women, especially non-working women, from analyses (Corcoran, 1979: 220; Corcoran *et al.*, 1984: 181, 186). Furthermore, continuously working women, who are explicitly stated by authors to form an unrepresentative subgroup (Corcoran *et al.*, 1984: 178), are none the less described by other researchers as if they were representative of all (working) women, including intermittent workers (Rosenfeld, 1983: 638; Jacobs, 1979: 164). Studies of the relationship between fertility and employment using event-history analysis (such as Desai and Waite, 1991) are often assumed to overcome selection bias. However, they routinely exclude women who were not working before the birth as well as the substantively important minority of women who remain childless and work continuously (Hakim, 1995*b*), they rarely discuss the size and characteristics of these two excluded groups, and, as Desai and Waite (1991: 555–8) openly admit, such studies are biased towards women with high work commitment, who formed two-thirds of their sample, despite the exclusion of women delaying a first birth, who are most likely to invest in education, training and a career. The problem is not so much that social scientists are unaware of the problem of selection bias, but that it is often seen as a minor technical problem with a statistical solution because the heterogeneity of the female population is perceived to be small enough to continue treating the female population as a single group.[25] Small adjustments to results for working women still leave non-working women out of the picture. Studies which distinguish between women who plan work careers and those who plan to be full-time homemakers are rare, but those doing so discover theoretically important substantive differences between labour-market subgroups. For example, Stephan and Schroeder (1979) distinguished between careerists, non-career workers, and housewives on the basis of employment patterns, and observed that careerists were distinctive in not being affected by the factors identified as influencing the work decision of the 'average' woman, such as husband's earnings and the number of children. Desai and Waite (1991) found job convenience factors affected women whose aim was homemaking and not women planning careers. Rexroat and Shehan (1984) found that marital status and the presence of young children only affected work decisions among women intending to be homemakers, while employment experience only had an impact among women planning work careers.

Surprisingly, sociologists are less sensitive to female heterogeneity and sample selection bias than are economists, as illustrated by the contributors to Scott (1994). Probably the most common example of the failure to acknowledge sample selection bias in research results is the presentation of results for working women as if they were representative of all women of working age (Berk, 1983: 393). Entire research teams ignore the substantive implications of excluding non-working women from analyses of work histories, work orientations, and attitudes to the domestic division of labour (Scott, 1994), with results for the working population regularly presented as if they described all men and women

(Vogler, 1994).[26] Adjusting research results for working women to take account of the large group of non-working women can significantly alter conclusions, for example on the sex differential in work commitment (Hakim, 1991: 106, 1995*b*). Sociologists can be insensitive to the theoretical and substantive implications of restricting an analysis to women in continuous employment, or to the even more selective subgroup of women in continuous employment who changed their occupation and/or employer in a given period. For example, Rosenfeld (1983) draws broad conclusions about barriers between sex-segregated occupations from an analysis of the tiny group of people who changed employers in the period 1972–3.[27] Similarly, the essence of Jacobs' 'revolving doors' thesis is that he claims to have shown that women are forced out of male-dominated occupations more frequently than they quit integrated occupations or female-dominated occupations (Jacobs, 1989: 142). But because his analysis is restricted to the tiny minority of occupation changers and to mature women employed over the decade 1967–77, it excludes the largest element of female labour turnover, which would alter the balance of movements in and out of the three types of occupation. The analysis carried out by Jacobs, while innovative, was too flawed to substantiate his 'revolving doors' thesis of social control mechanisms employed by men to freeze women out of sex-atypical occupations,[28] yet was accepted uncritically, perhaps because it is inherently plausible.[29] Furthermore, evidence from British studies and other US studies contradicts his thesis.

As noted above, male-dominated occupations did not differ from integrated and female-dominated occupations in outflow or inflow rates, which were determined solely by sex and whether working in full-time or part-time jobs (Table 11). A replication and extended analysis by S. Jacobs (1995*b*) using the SCELI data for Britain also completely failed to corroborate J. Jacobs' thesis. Occupational changes over 15 and 25 years were examined, for men and women, and were found to be largely stable within the three categories of male-dominated, female-dominated, and integrated occupations. Similarly, a large degree of stability in type of occupation was found over the decade 1971–81 in Britain; patterns of occupational stability and change did not differ at all between men and women, with both groups drifting back to sex-typical occupations over time (Hakim, 1995*a*) as noted also by Rosenfeld (1984: 77) and Rosenfeld and Spenner (1992: 430) for the USA. Simpson *et al.* (1982: 1309) found that the sex composition of occupations did not explain the differences between their patterns of recruiting and retaining male and female labour forces in the USA, and concluded that females in male occupations are more like other females than like males in their labour market behaviour. Waite and Berryman (1986) found no evidence that being in a sex-atypical occupation increased turnover rates for young women or men. Finally, recent US research shows that, in the period covered by Jacobs' study, women in male-dominated occupations had significantly greater continuity of employment than women in female-dominated occupations (Rexroat, 1992), a result which is wholly inconsistent with Jacobs' social exclusion thesis. Thus sociologists who fail to take proper account of the complexities of labour mobility and the qualitative differences between continuous and discontinuous workers are developing misleading theses on the basis of inadequate analyses.

Conclusions

It has already been established that most if not all of the expansion of part-time jobs in recent decades in Europe has been at the expense of full-time jobs. The substitution of part-time jobs for full-time jobs renders economic activity rates unreliable for cross-national comparisons and trend analysis (Hakim, 1993*a*; Jonung and Persson, 1993). This paper points up an equally important development, namely the expansion of the fragmented employment profile which has been replacing continuous employment and the homemaker career in Britain in the post-war decades. The trend is revealed only by work-history studies, and has in a sense remained hidden in results interpreted as showing women's 'lifetime attachment to the labour market' (Main, 1988*a*: 49). It is reflected in, and may largely explain, continuing sex differentials in labour mobility and employment stability throughout the post-war period, despite rising economic activity rates.

There is no reason to expect that the dominance of the discontinuous employment profile now found among British women will necessarily be repeated elsewhere in Europe. Some countries, such as France and Finland, will have a much higher incidence of continuous employment among women. Other countries, such as Ireland or Germany, could be expected to have a much higher proportion of women following the homemaker career. No doubt policies designed to increase labour-force flexibility are now contributing to the expansion of fragmented employment histories among men as well as women, but the principal factor remains the vast sex differential in employment patterns, which varies further between countries (OECD, 1994: 59).

The two standard measures of labour mobility and employment stability — annual labour turnover and average job tenure — reveal a continuing sex differential of about 50 per cent in Britain. This sex differential is typical of the European Community as a whole, even though overall labour mobility in Britain is above the Community average (European Commission, 1994: 86–7, 97–9). However, the standard measures conceal more than they reveal, due to sample selection bias. Women are two to four times more likely than men to move in and out of the labour force, a dramatic sex differential that emerges only when labour-force movements are measured across a fixed period of years rather than in relation to employment with a single employer. Adopting an even broader perspective of employment profiles across decades, or the life-cycle, the sex differential in labour-market participation expands further to become qualitative differences between the typically male pattern of continuous full-time lifetime employment versus the fragmented work histories now dominating the female workforce in Britain, with the homemaker career more important in some countries. The standard measures of labour mobility are no longer very useful. Social scientists need to agree new typologies of employment histories which will permit comparisons across time and societies.

Virtually all men remain in the labour market throughout their working life, compared to around 10 per cent of women in Britain today and 15 per cent thirty years ago. In Britain, the majority of adult women have a discontinuous employment profile — sufficiently fragmented, in fact, to be labelled contingent, conditional, or marginal workers instead of pretending that this redistribution of employment, often part-time, across the life-cycle represents increased commitment to market work. This is one more element of the polarization of women's employment already observed in patterns of occupational segregation and earnings (Humphries and Rubery, 1992; Hakim, 1993*b*). As the occupational composition of the female workforce changes, with women achieving an increasing share of professional and managerial occupations (Hakim, 1992: 136), female labour turnover and job tenure will similarly polarize, with some women acquiring the low turnover rates and long job tenures typical of higher-grade occupations while others retain the high turnover rates and short job tenures typical in lower-grade occupations. Burgess and Rees (1994) have already discovered substantial and increasing differences in tenure between upper and lower quartile earnings groups over the period 1976–90 among women and men. We can no longer ignore these important qualitative divisions within the female workforce in future research, most especially in cross-national comparisons within Europe.

Notes

1. From the employer's view, the specific reason for a woman worker leaving a job is irrelevant. Whether she leaves to marry, to have a baby, to take another job because her husband's job has been moved to another city, or to take another job because it is closer to home does not alter the employer's need to hire and retrain a replacement worker, with the associated costs.
2. This unwillingness to admit sex differentials runs through the US research literature as well. Studies repeatedly observe large sex differentials in quit rates, large differences between part-time and full-time workers in separation rates, note that the sex differential in separation rates increases with job tenure and that it is well known that women are more likely to leave the labour market, but then quickly dismiss these findings as 'explained' by age, occupation, wage rates, qualifications, or a combination of such factors (Haber *et al.*, 1983; Treiman, 1985; Meitzen, 1986; Hachen, 1990; Light and Ureta, 1992). Cross-sectional statistical associations are routinely read as causal links, with the direction of causality simply assumed by the researcher. In some cases researchers

demonstrate the absence of any major sex differential in turnover rates, but fail to explain how this result can coexist with clear sex differentials in job tenure and labour-force quits. In other cases researchers focus mainly or exclusively on changes of occupation and/or employer (Hachen, 1990; Loprest, 1992), but the results are later misrepresented as referring to labour turnover more generally. Hachen (1990) confirms that in the decades up to 1980 women had a much higher propensity to quit the labour force than men, yet insists that men and women were 'equally mobile' because women had a lower propensity for other job moves and promotions. Light and Ureta (1992) provide the most recent and detailed analysis, showing that young women's labour-market behaviour changed significantly in the 1980s, with personal and family factors having far less impact on job quit decisions than they did in the 1970s. However, they are obliged to admit, in their conclusions, that the sex differential in turnover remains strong in the USA, that the modal woman has a higher quit rate than the modal man after holding age and job tenure constant, and that women now quit jobs at childbirth rather than at marriage, so that personal reasons still dominate quit decisions for women. In contrast, federal government researchers are straightforward about the continuing sex differential in labour turnover, job tenure and employment continuity (Horvath, 1982; Smith, 1982, 1983).

3. Commonly called the marriage bar, or barrier, in Britain this consisted of the rule, jointly enforced by employers and trade unions, especially in white-collar occupations, that women had to leave employment upon marriage.
4. Cohn seems to have been unaware of a conflicting thesis being developed by Goldin (1986) around the same time, arguing that the continuing sex differential in labour turnover and monitoring costs were sufficient to explain the origins and persistence of occupational segregation in Western industrial economies.
5. The 1990 British Workplace Industrial Relations Survey shows that resignations and leaving employment excluding dismissals are higher, in both the public and private sectors, in establishments with high concentrations of part-timers (Millward *et al.*, 1992: 327). Higher turnover rates among part-timers are due to voluntary job quits rather than dismissals or redundancy. Employers sometimes withhold supplementary employment benefits from part-timers. Similarly state policies often exclude part-timers from social welfare benefits, typically because they are exempted from paying the usual insurance contributions for these benefits and/or work very short hours. Recent studies are beginning to reveal large differences between industrial societies in the position of part-time jobs in the workforce and in work histories, and also in the numbers of people working very short hours — who clearly have competing interests and activities and must be secondary workers who rely on other sources of income (European Commission, 1994: 103–27; OECD, 1994: 73–100).
6. The term 'labour mobility' is sometimes used loosely to refer to geographical mobility across regions of a country, or between countries within the European Union. The reference in this paper is solely to movement within, into, and out of the labour market, without reference to any associated geographical mobility.
7. The sex differential is the ratio between the male and female (average) rates, not the arithmetical difference between the two rates, which will always be small.
8. A different example is a study by Bielby[8] and Bielby (1988) testing Becker's thesis about some married women giving priority to family responsibilities over market work. They used the highly selective Quality of Working Life Surveys, which collected data only on permanent jobs involving at least 20 hours a week, with the emphasis therefore on the full-time workforce, despite the fact that wives in part-time jobs of under 20 hours a week and temporary jobs and currently non-working wives are crucially relevant to the theory being tested. The authors acknowledged that the data-set was not appropriate, but went ahead anyway, and their paper is regularly quoted with uncritical acclaim as a definitive refutation of Becker's thesis (see for example Reskin and Padavic, 1994: 41, 112).
9. Some sociologists argue that job effects might emerge if we were able to analyse data for people in specific jobs with specific employers, pointing to the well-established fact that occupational segregation is always more marked when jobs rather than occupations are used as the unit of analysis. However, the theoretically appropriate level of analysis is occupations rather than jobs, both for studies of occupational segregation (Hakim, 1995*a*) and labour mobility, as we are assessing whether occupational careers shape people's expectations and behaviour at the societal level. Jobs might be the appropriate level of analysis in some cases, for example for studies of the impact of employers' policies within firms and organizations.
10. The British 1% Longitudinal Study is based on information for a 1% sample of the population taken from the 1971 Census, updated with information on the sample from the 1981, 1991, and subsequent

Censuses, and with other demographic information already held by OPCS such as birth and death registration, notification of cases of cancer, and internal and overseas migration as reflected in a change of address in national health service records. The study aims to provide a dynamic population sample and a source for national statistics and research on fertility, mortality, migration, and labour mobility (OPCS, 1973, 1988). Geographical coverage of the study is now limited to England and Wales, excluding Scotland. The 1% LS only provides data on labour-market status at each decennial census, with no information on employment in the intervening decade. The LS thus provides data on labour mobility, measured in terms of workforce entries and exits over the decade, but not on employment continuity.

11. This classification is defined in the note to Table 10 and is discussed more fully in Hakim (1993*b*).
12. The exception is the higher exit rate among the tiny subgroup of male part-timers, most of whom were older workers in the pre-retirement phase.
13. The LFS suggests that towards the end of the 1980s the differential in labour-force mobility between full-timers and part-timers was overtaking the sex differential in size. Among people of working age in employment in spring 1988, twice as many women as men left the workforce in the following 12 months: 7% of women compared to 4% of men (Department of Employment, 1990: Table 5). Among employees in employment in spring 1987, 9% had entered the workforce in the preceding 12 months, replacing the 8% who left the workforce in the preceding 12 months. However, entries to the part-time workforce were three times higher than entries to the full-time workforce: 19% compared to 6% (Department of Employment, 1991: Table 1).
14. Age affects mobility rates when analyses are extended to the very youngest and oldest age groups. Labour mobility is at its highest among young people, who may be combining education and work, and 'sampling' different types of work before they settle down to a longer-term choice of job (Baxter, 1975). Turnover rates of 60% per year have been recorded for young people under 18 years (Department of Employment, 1972: 351). Arguably, analyses of turnover and tenure should always exclude the especially volatile group of people aged under 20 years, or under 25. From the age of 20 onwards, annual turnover rates of 30–35% per year are more common, declining to around 10% for people aged 50–59 years (Department of Employment 1972: 351). Long job tenures are concentrated among older workers, logically. The new phenomenon of early retirement and part-time retirement, which begins from age 50 onwards, has lowered the appropriate upper cut-off point for analyses of labour mobility to 50.
15. The term 'career' is used here to mean a broad development of skills and experience within a chosen field of activity over the life-cycle, or the adjustments made by an individual over the life-cycle to the social institutions, formal, and informal relationships in which the chosen main activity is performed. These definitions avoid the assumption that careers are found only in professional occupations, or of progression up an occupational hierarachy, and can be applied to non-market activities such as the homemaker career as well as market work.
16. The NLS surveys suggest a much faster pace of change in the USA over just a decade among younger cohorts of women. About one-third of the first cohort of young women, aged 14–24 in 1968, planned to be working at age 35, in the 1980s (Rexroat and Shehan, 1984: 352). In contrast about two-thirds of the second NLS cohort of young women, aged 14–21 in 1979, planned to be working at age 35, in the 1990s, and barely one-third planned to be full-time homemakers (Desai and Waite, 1991: 553).
17. One variant of this profile defines the modern homemaker as working only in part-time and casual jobs, if at all, after marriage, so that market work remains secondary and contingent on a primary concern with family responsibilities. A 1986 British survey showed that among women working part-time 80% accepted the traditional domestic division of labour that allocated primary responsibility for housekeeping to the wife and the primary earning role to the husband, whereas only a minority of women working full-time held these views (Vogler, 1994: 55). So there is evidence to support this alternative formulation. However, identification of this profile within work histories requires full information on part-time and full-time jobs across the life-cycle.
18. The original report on this survey indicated in Table 9.6 that 25% of the sample were 'always economically active'. But this result rested on a peculiar definition of economic activity (Martin and Roberts, 1984:122–3) and, as Main notes in his more detailed analysis of the same data, Table 9.6 also analyses confounded cohort effects and life-cycle effects (Main, 1988*a*: 51).
19. Whether discontinuous employment would also show up in Swedish work-history surveys will depend heavily on whether periods of parental leave are classified as breaks in employment (since they are periods out of market work) or as continuous employment (on the grounds that legal employment rights are maintained). These long spells out of the

labour market do show up in national statistical surveys of absences from work, which show Sweden to be an outlier on these measures (OECD, 1991).

20. Annual work experience and worklife estimates for the USA are published regularly in the *Monthly Labor Review*, but there are no equivalent data for Britain, nor for any other European country, to our knowledge.
21. See Hakim (1987: 77–9) for an explanation of these terms.
22. The analysis is based on the Longitudinal Study, which strictly speaking only identifies women working in 1971 and 1981 who were in the same occupation at both censuses.
23. This is in effect current practice in the recording of women's occupation at death registration. Instructions to registrars state 'in the case of a woman who is not employed at the date of her death, the last full-time occupation should not be recorded unless she has been in paid employment for most of her life'. For women who died in the period 1970–2, only 20% had worked most of their lives and had an occupation recorded on the death certificate.
24. There is an interesting discrepancy between studies of labour-market behaviour, which tend to deny or minimize sex differentials (see n. 2 above) and studies of the pay gap, which are forced to acknowledge the impact of sex differentials in job tenure and work experience.
25. Another problem is that economists define heterogeneity in terms of actual employment, measured in work history data, whereas sociologists more often focus on qualitative differences in work orientations and work plans, as displayed in attitudinal data, although these affect employment choices eventually. On one level, this is just a difference between objective and subjective definitions of heterogeneity, between continuous and categorical variables, but the difference in approach has important methodological implications.
26. In most studies, the relevant information is not even collected for non-working women. The example of the SCELI survey reports is pertinent because the information was collected for all persons aged 20–60, so researchers made a conscious decision to ignore the data for non-working women.
27. Given the study's focus on sex segregation of occupations, the more appropriate analysis would have shown people changing jobs and employers in relation to total numbers in male-dominated and female-dominated occupations rather than as a percentage of the small subgroup of jobchangers. On average 10% of employed civilians change occupation each year in the USA, a minority small enough to raise doubts about representativeness, and Rosenfeld does not demonstrate that simply adding a control for employer tenure would be sufficient to overcome selection bias in this study. Almost half of occupation changers are young single people; only 4% of married men and women change occupation in a given year (Markey and Parks, 1989). So a sample of occupation changers is necessarily biased towards young people with less work experience, few or no family responsibilities and, arguably, a less developed career.
28. Jacobs's analysis is also clouded by his use of information on women's current or last occupation for both 1967 and 1977, with no indication of the percentage actually working at either date.
29. There are equally plausible alternative explanations for the statistical results obtained by Jacobs, which he never addresses. Many male-dominated occupations in consultancy, finance, and management, for example, involve working hours hugely in excess of a normal working day or week, and many male-dominated occupations involve regular business travel that eats into private lives. These all-consuming jobs are often attractive to young single people but become less attractive to older married people who may switch to less demanding occupations. Thus female exits from certain jobs may be caused by occupational characteristics rather than by male colleagues' attempts to discourage them from staying, actively or covertly. Waite and Berryman (1986) review other reasons for women leaving male-dominated jobs in the military, an unsupportive social environment being only one of many. Reskin and Padavic (1994: 134–141) describe the male and female work cultures and behaviours that can be experienced as exclusionary by men and women.

Acknowledgements

I would like to thank OPCS for allowing me use of the OPCS Longitudinal Study and members of the LS Support Programme at the Social Statistics Research Unit (SSRU), City University, in particular Simon Gleave, for assistance with accessing the data. I am indebted to Soren Leth-Sorensen in Danmarks Statistik for making available a quantity of unpublished data on labour mobility in Denmark, including the analyses which form the basis for Table 8. I should like to thank Sheila Jacobs for providing special analyses of the 1980 WES and other tables from her unpublished D.Phil thesis, including the analyses that provide the basis for Table 15

of this paper. I should like to thank Simon Burgess for providing some additional analyses of the GHS for Table 5. I should like to thank Brian Main and the Institute for Employment Research at the University of Warwick for permission to reprint two figures presenting WES analyses. I am grateful to Heather Joshi, Colin Mills, and anonymous reviewers for comments on an earlier version of the paper.

References

Ashenfelter O, Layard R. (1986): *Handbook of Labor Economics*, 2 vols, New York and Oxford: North Holland.

Baxter J L. (1975): 'The Chronic Job Changer: A Study of Youth Unemployment', *Social and Economic Administration*, 9 (autumn): 184–206.

Becker G S. (1991): *A Treatise on the Family*, Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press.

Berk R. (1983): 'An Introduction to Sample Selection Bias in Sociological Data', *American Sociological Review*, 48: 386–98.

Bielby D D, Bielby W T. (1988): 'She Works Hard for the Money: Household Responsibilities and the Allocation of Work Effort', *American Journal of Sociology*, 93: 1031–59.

Blau F D, Ferber M A. (1992): *The Economics of Women, Men and Work*, Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall.

Blossfeld H-P. (1987): 'Labour Market Entry and the Sexual Segregation of Careers in the Federal Republic of Germany', *American Journal of Sociology*, 93: 89–118.

——, Mayer K U. (1988): 'Labor Market Segmentation in the Federal Republic of Germany: An Empirical Study of Segmentation Theories from a Life Course Perspective', *European Sociological Review*, 4: 123–40.

Boyer R. (1989) (ed.): *The Search for Labour Market Flexibility: The European Economies in Transition*, Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Burgess S, Rees H. (1994): 'Lifetime Jobs and Transient Jobs: Job Tenure in Britain 1975–1991', mimeo, University of Bristol, Department of Economics.

Clogg C C, Eliason S R, Wahl R J. (1990): 'Labor Market Experiences and Labor-Force Outcomes', *American Journal of Sociology*, 95: 1536–76.

Cohen M S, Schwartz A R. (1980): 'U.S. Labor Turnover: Analysis of a New Measure', *Monthly Labor Review*, 103/11: 9–13.

Cohn S. (1985): *The Process of Occupational Sex-Typing: The Feminisation of Clerical Work in Great Britain*, Philadelphia: Temple University Press.

Corcoran M E. (1979): 'Work Experience, Labor Force Withdrawal and Women's Wages: Empirical Results using the 1976 Panel Study of Income Dynamics', in Lloyd C B, Andrews E S and Gilroy C L. (eds.), *Women in the Labor Market*, New York: Columbia University Press: 216–45.

——, Duncan G J, Ponza M. (1984): 'Work Experience, Job Segregation and Wages', in Reskin B F. (ed.), *Sex Segregation in the Workplace: Trends, Explanations, Remedies*, Washington DC: National Academy Press: 171–91.

Cragg A, Dawson T.(1984): *Unemployed Women: A Study of Attitudes and Experiences*, research paper no. 47, London: Department of Employment.

Department of Employment (1972): 'Labour Turnover: Estimates based on Employment Surveys and New Earnings Surveys', *Employment Gazette*, 80/4: 347–51.

——(1986): 'Classification of Economic Activity', *Employment Gazette*, 94: 21–7.

——(1990): 'Women in the Labour Market: Results from the 1989 Labour Force Survey', *Employment Gazette*, 98: 619–43.

——(1991): 'Labour Mobility: Evidence from the Labour Force Survey', *Employment Gazette*, 99: 437–52.

Desai S, Waite L J. (1991): 'Women's Employment during Pregnancy and after the First Birth: Occupational Characteristics and Work Commitment', *American Sociological Review*, 56/4: 551–66.

Dex S. (1985): *The Sexual Division of Work*, Brighton: Harvester Press.

——(1987): *Women's Occupational Mobility*, London: Macmillan.

Elias P. (1988): 'Family Formation, Occupational Mobility and Part-Time Work', in Hunt A. (ed.), *Women and Paid Work*, London: Macmillan: 83–104.

——, Gregory M. (1994): *The Changing Structure of Occupations and Earnings in Great Britain, 1975–1990 — An Analysis based on the New Earnings Survey Panel Dataset*, research series no. 27, London: Employment Department.

——, Main B. (1982): *Women's Working Lives: Evidence from the National Training Survey*, University of Warwick: Institute for Employment Research.

——, White M. (1991): *Recruitment in Local Labour Markets: Employer and Employee Perspectives*, research paper no. 86, London: Department of Employment.

European Commission (1991): *Employment in Europe 1991*, Luxembourg: Office for Official Publications of the European Communities.

——(1994): 'Mobility, Labour Turnover and Labour Market Flexibility' and 'Changes in Working Time',

in *Employment in Europe 1994*, Luxembourg: Office for Official Publications of the European Communities: 83–101, 103–27.

Finch J. (1983): *Married to the Job: Wives' Incorporation in Men's Work*, London: Allen & Unwin.

Fiorentine R. (1987): 'Men, Women and the Premed Persistence Gap: A Normative Alternatives Approach', *American Journal of Sociology*, 92: 1118–39.

Glass J, Camarigg V. (1992): 'Gender, Parenthood and Job–Family Compatibility', *American Journal of Sociology*, 98/1: 131–51.

Goldin C. (1986): 'Monitoring Costs and Occupational Segregation by Sex: A Historical Analysis', *Journal of Labor Economics*, 4: 1–27.

——(1989): 'Life-Cycle Labor Force Participation of Married Women: Historical Evidence and Implications', *Journal of Labor Economics*, 7: 20–47.

——(1990): *Understanding the Gender Gap*, New York: Oxford University Press.

——, Polacheck S. (1987): 'Residual Differences by Sex: Perspectives on the Gender Gap in Earnings', *American Economic Review*, 77: 143–51.

Gregg P, Wadsworth J. (1995) 'A Short History of Labour Turnover, Job Tenure and Job Security, 1975–93', *Oxford Review of Economic Policy*, 11: 73–90.

Haber S E, Lamas E J, Green G. (1983): 'A New Method for Estimating Job Separations by Sex and Race', *Monthly Labor Review*, 106/6: 20–7.

Hachen D S. (1990): 'Three Models of Job Mobility in Labor Markets', *Work and Occupations*, 17/3: 320–54.

Hakim C. (1982): *Secondary Analysis*, London: Routledge/Allen & Unwin.

——(1987): *Research Design*, London: Routledge/Allen & Unwin.

——(1989*a*): 'Employment Rights: A Comparison of Part-Time and Full-Time Employees', *Industrial Law Journal*, 18: 69–83.

——(1989*b*): 'Workforce Restructuring, Social Insurance Coverage and the Black Economy', *Journal of Social Policy*, 18: 471–503.

——(1990): 'Workforce Restructuring in Europe in the 1990s', *Journal of Comparative Labour Law and Industrial Relations*, 5: 167–203.

——(1991): 'Grateful Slaves and Self-Made Women: Fact and Fantasy in Women's Work Orientations', *European Sociological Review*, 7: 101–21.

——(1992): 'Explaining Trends in Occupational Segregation: The Measurement, Causes and Consequences of the Sexual Division of Labour', *European Sociological Review*, 8: 127–52.

——(1993*a*): 'The Myth of Rising Female Employment', *Work, Employment and Society*, 7: 97–120.

——(1993*b*): 'Segregated and Integrated Occupations: A New Approach to Analysing Social Change', *European Sociological Review*, 9: 289–314.

——(1995*a*): 'Theoretical and Measurement Issues in the Analysis of Occupational Segregation', *Beiträge zur Arbeitsmarkt- und Berufsforschung* (Monographs on Employment Research), no. 186.

——(1995*b*): 'Five Feminist Myths about Female Employment', *British Journal of Sociology*, 46: 429–55.

Harrop A, Joshi H. (1994): 'Death and the Saleswomen: An Investigation of Mortality and Occupational Immobility of Women in the Longitudinal Study of England and Wales', London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine, Centre for Population Studies.

Heckman J J. (1979): 'New Evidence on the Dynamics of Female Labor Supply', in Lloyd C B, Andrews E S, Gilroy C L. (eds.), *Women in the Labor Market*, New York: Columbia University Press: 66–116.

——, Willis R J. (1977): 'A Beta-Logistic Model for the Analysis of Sequential Labor Force Participation by Married Women', *Journal of Political Economy*, 85: 27–58.

Hepple B A, Hakim C. (1996): 'Working Time in Britain', in Blanpain R, Rojot J. (eds.), *Legal and Contractual Limitations to Working-Time in the European Community Member States*, Leuven: Peeters.

Horrigan M W, Markey J P. (1990): 'Recent Gains in Women's Earnings: Better Pay or Longer Hours?', *Monthly Labor Review*, 113/7: 11–17.

Horvath F W. (1982): 'Job Tenure of Workers in January 1981', *Monthly Labor Review*, 105/9: 34–6.

Humphries J, Rubery J. (1992): 'The Legacy for Women's Employment: Integration, Differentiation and Polarisation', in Michie J. (ed.), *The Economic Legacy of Thatcherism*, London: Academic Press: 236–57.

Hunt A. (1968*a*,*b*): *A Survey of Women's Employment: Report and Tables*, 2 vols, London: HMSO.

——(1975): *Management Attitudes and Practices Towards Women at Work*, London: HMSO.

ILO (International Labour Office) (1962): 'Discrimination in Employment or Occupations on the Basis of Marital Status', *International Labour Review*, 85: 368–89.

Jacobs J A. (1989): *Revolving Doors: Sex Segregation and Women's Careers*, Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press.

Jacobs S. (1995*a*): unpublished D. Phil. thesis on women's employment, Nuffield College, Oxford.

——(1995*b*): 'Changing Patterns of Sex Segregated Occupations throughout the Life-Course', *European Sociological Review*, 11: 157–71.

Jenson J, Hagen E, Reddy C. (eds.) (1988): *Feminization of the Labour Force: Paradoxes and Promises*, New York: Oxford University Press.

Jonung C, Persson I (1993): 'Women and Market Work: The Misleading Tale of Participation Rates in International Comparisons', *Work, Employment and Society*, 7: 259–74.

Kilbourne B S, England P, Farkas G, Beron K, Weir D. (1994): 'Returns to Skill, Compensating Differentials and Gender Bias: Effects of Occupational Characteristics on the Wages of White Women and Men', *American Journal of Sociology*, 100: 689–719.

Killingsworth M R, Heckman J J. (1986): 'Female Labour Supply: A Survey', in Ashenfelter O, Layard R. (eds.), *Handbook of Labour Economics*, i, Amsterdam: North Holland: 103–204.

Leth-Sorensen S, Rohwer G. (1993): 'Aspects of the Female Life Cycle and Labor Market Participation in Denmark', paper presented to the European Conference on Part-Time Work held in Bremen, Dec.

Light A, Ureta M. (1992): 'Panel Estimates of Male and Female Job Turnover Behaviour: Can Female Nonquitters be Identified?', *Journal of Labor Economics*, 10: 156–81.

Lloyd C B, Andrews E S, Gilroy C L (1979) (eds.): *Women in the Labor Market*, New York: Columbia University Press.

Loprest P J. (1992): 'Gender Differences in Wage Growth and Job Mobility', *American Economic Review, Papers and Proceedings*, 88/2: 526–32.

Main B G M. (1981): 'The Length of Employment and Unemployment in Great Britain', *Scottish Journal of Political Economy*, 28: 146–64.

——(1982): 'The Length of a Job in Great Britain', *Economica*, 195/49: 325–33.

——(1988*a*): 'The Lifetime Attachment of Women to the Labour Market', in Hunt A. (ed.), *Women and Paid Work*, London: Macmillan: 23–51.

——(1988*b*): 'Women's Hourly Earnings: The Influence of Work Histories on Rates of Pay', in Hunt A. (ed.), *Women and Paid Work*, London: Macmillan: 105–22.

Maret E. (1983); *Women's Career Patterns*, Lanham MD: University Press of America.

Markey J P, Parks W. (1989): 'Occupational Change: Pursuing a Different Kind of Work', *Monthly Labor Review*, 112/9: 3–12.

Marsh C. (1991): *Hours of Work of Women and Men in Britain*, London: HMSO.

Martin C, Roberts J. (1984): *Women and Employment: A Lifetime Perspective*, London: HMSO.

Meitzen M E. (1986): 'Differences in Male and Female Job-Quitting Behaviour', *Journal of Labor Economics*, 4: 151–67.

Mellor E F, Parks W. (1988): 'A Year's Work: Labor Force Activity from a Different Perspective', *Monthly Labor Review*, 111/9: 13–18.

Meulders D, Plasman R, Vander Stricht V. (1993): *The Position of Women on the Labour Market in the European Community*, Aldershot: Dartmouth Publishing.

Mills C. (1994): 'Who Dominates Whom? Social Class, Conjugal Households and Political Identification', *Sociological Review*, 42: 639–63.

——(1995): 'Managerial and Professional Work Histories' in Butler T, Savage M. (eds.), *Social Change and the Middle Classes*, London: University College London Press.

Millward N, Stevens M, Smart D, Hawes W R. (1992): *Workplace Industrial Relations in Transition: The ED/ESRC/PSI/ACAS Surveys*, Aldershot: Dartmouth.

Myrdal A, Klein V. (1956, 1968): *Women's Two Roles: Home and Work*, London: Routledge.

OECD (1984): 'Employment Turnover and Job Tenure', in *Employment Outlook*, Paris: OECD: 56–8.

——(1989): 'Job Tenure by Industry', in *Employment Outlook*, Paris: OECD: 185–9.

——(1991): 'Absence from Work Reported in Labour Force Surveys', in *Employment Outlook*, Paris: OECD: 177–98.

——(1993): 'Enterprise Tenure, Labour Turnover and Skill Training', in *Employment Outlook*, Paris: OECD: 119–55.

——(1994): *Women and Structural Change*, Paris: OECD.

O'Neill J. (1985): 'The Trend in the Male–Female Wage Gap in the United States', *Journal of Labor Economics*, 3/1: S91–S116.

——, Polachek S. (1993): 'Why the Gender Gap in Wages Narrowed in the 1980s', *Journal of Labor Economics*, 11: 205–28.

OPCS (1973): *Cohort Studies — New Developments*, Studies on Medical and Population Subjects no. 25, London: HMSO.

——(1988): *Census 1971–1981: The Longitudinal Study — England and Wales*, CEN81LS, London: HMSO.

——(1992): *General Household Survey 1990*, London: HMSO for the Office of Population Censuses and Surveys.

Pfau-Effinger B. (1993): 'Modernisation, Culture and Part-Time Employment: The Example of Finland and West Germany', *Work, Employment and Society*, 7: 383–410.

Polachek S W. (1979): 'Occupational Segregation among Women: Theory, Evidence and a Prognosis', in Lloyd C B, Andrews E S, Gilroy C L. (eds.), *Women in the Labor Market*, New York: Columbia University Press: 137–70.

Pollert A. (1981): *Girls, Wives, Factory Lives*, London: Macmillan.

Reskin B F, Padavic I. (1994): *Women and Men at Work*, London: Pine Forge Press.

——, Roos B A. (1990): *Job Queues, Gender Queues: Explaining Women's Inroads into Male Occupations*, Philadelphia: Temple University Press.

Rexroat C. (1992): 'Changes in the Employment Continuity of Succeeding Cohorts of Young Women', *Work and Occupations*, 19: 18–34.

——, Shehan, C. (1984): 'Expected versus actual work roles of women', *American Sociological Review*, 49: 349–358.

Richardson J H. (1954): *An Introduction to the Study of Industrial Relations*, London: Allen & Unwin.

Roberts S, Marshall G. (1995): 'Intergenerational Class Processes and the Asymmetry Hypothesis', *Sociology*, 29: 43–58.

Rosenfeld R A. (1983): 'Sex Segregation and Sectors', *American Sociological Review*, 48: 637–56.

——(1984): 'Job Changing and Occupational Sex Segregation: Sex and Race Comparisons', in Reskin B F. (ed.), *Sex Segregation in the Workplace: Trends, Explanations, Remedies*, Washington DC: National Academy Press: 56–86.

——, Spenner K I. (1992): 'Occupational Segregation and Women's Early Career Job Shifts', *Work and Occupations*, 19: 424–49; repr. in Jacobs J A. (ed.), *Gender Inequality at Work*, 1995, London, Sage: 231–58.

Rubery J, Fagan C. (1994): *Wage Determination and Sex Segregation in Employment in the European Community, Social Europe*, Supplement 4/94, Luxembourg: Office for Official Publications of the European Communities.

Sandell S, Shapiro D. (1980): 'Work Expectations, Human Capital Accumulation and the Wages of Young Women', *Journal of Human Resources*, 15: 335–53.

Scott A M. (1994) (ed.): *Gender Segregation and Social Change*, Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Simpson I H. *et al.* (1982): 'Occupational Recruitment, Retention and Labor Force Cohort Representation', *American Journal of Sociology*, 87: 1287–1313.

Sloane P J. (1990): 'Sex Differentials: Structure, Stability and Change', in Gregory M B, Thomson A W J. (eds.), *A Portrait of Pay 1970–1982: An Analysis of the New Earnings Survey*, Oxford: Clarendon Press: 125–71.

Smith S J. (1982): 'New Worklife Estimates Reflect Changing Profile of Labor Force', *Monthly Labor Review*, 105/3: 15–20.

——(1983): 'Estimating Annual Hours of Labor Force Activity', *Monthly Labor Review*, 106/2: 13–22.

Sommers D, Eck A. (1977): 'Occupational Mobility in the American Labour Force', *Monthly Labor Review*, 100: 3–19.

Sorensen E. (1989): 'The Wage Effects of Occupational Sex Composition: A Review and New Findings', in Hill M A, Killingsworth M R. (eds.), *Comparable Worth: Analyses and Evidence*, Ithaca NY: ILR Press: 57–89.

Sproat K, Churchill H, Sheets C. (1985): *The National Longitudinal Surveys of Labor Market Experience: An Annotated Bibliography of Research*, Lexington, Mass.: Lexington Books.

Stephan P E, Schroeder L D. (1979): 'Career Decisions and Labour Force Participation of Married Women', in Lloyd C B. *et al.* (eds.), *Women in the Labor Market*, New York: Columbia University Press: 119–35.

Stewart M B, Greenhalgh C A. (1984): 'Work History Patterns and the Occupational Attainment of Women', *Economic Journal*, 94: 493–519.

Treiman D J. (1985): 'The Work Histories of Women and Men: What we Know and what we Need to Find out', in Rossi A S. (ed.), *Gender and the Life Course*, New York: Aldine: 213–31.

Vogler C. (1994): 'Segregation, Sexism and Labour Supply', in Scott A M. (ed.), *Gender Segregation and Social Change*, Oxford: Oxford University Press: 39–79.

Waite L J, Berryman S E. (1986): 'Job Stability among Young Women: A Comparison of Traditional and Nontraditional Occupations', *American Journal of Sociology*, 92: 568–95.

Wellington A J. (1994): 'Accounting for the Male/Female Wage Gap among Whites: 1976 and 1985', *American Sociological Review*, 59: 839–48.

Wood R G, Corcoran M E, Courant P N. (1993): 'Pay Differences among the Highly Paid: The Male–Female Earnings Gap in Lawyers' Salaries', *Journal of Labor Economics*, 11: 417–41.

Zabalza A, Arrufat J. (1985): 'The Extent of Sex Discrimination in Great Britain', in Zabalza A, Tzannatos Z, *Women and Equal Pay*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. 70–96, 120–37.

Zelizer V A. (1989): 'The Social Meaning of Money: Special Monies', *American Journal of Sociology*, 95: 342–77.

Author's address

Department of Sociology, London School of Economics, Houghton Street, London WC2A 2AE, UK. Tel: 0171 955-6655; fax: 0171 955-7405.

Manuscript received: November 1994