

Entry into and consequences of nonstandard work arrangements

Data from the National Longitudinal Survey of Youth suggest that recent occurrences such as the birth of a child or change in marital status can affect the likelihood of entering different types of employment arrangements

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There is growing concern that the employment patterns of U.S. firms are shifting toward more temporary work arrangements, such as hiring workers from temporary agencies or contracting work out, and away from more standard direct hire and longer-term work arrangements. The worry is that this development might result in lower paying and less stable jobs.¹ However, workers may take employment in a nonstandard arrangement, such as working for a temporary agency, for a number of reasons, including inability to find a permanent job, wanting to work fewer hours when they have a young child at home, or wanting to learn about a number of different jobs or fields. In addition, some nonstandard work arrangements, such as consulting or contracting, may provide workers with relatively more flexible and lucrative employment opportunities.²

This article explores the impact on workers aged 29 through 37 of being in a nonstandard employment arrangement. It first examines the distribution of workers among various employment arrangements, and then looks at aspects of work behavior and life “events” that may have influenced the likelihood of working in a nonstandard arrangement. Finally, it compares wages and hours worked on the previous job with those on the current job to see whether the nonstandard employment arrangements imply a relative “step up,” versus a “step down,” with respect to wages and hours.

The data

As the other articles in this issue of the *Review* emphasize, a need for individual-level data to examine the number of workers in different employment arrangements and their characteristics spurred the Bureau of Labor Statistics to create a special supplement to its Current Population Survey (CPS), designed to collect information on contingent workers and alternative work arrangements. The supplement was implemented in February of 1995. The need for individual-level information on different employment arrangements also has been addressed in the National Longitudinal Survey of Youth (NLSY), a data set sponsored by the Bureau of Labor Statistics. In 1994, the NLSY asked questions that directly inquired about each respondent’s type of employment relationship: each respondent was asked to indicate whether he or she was a regular employee at the job, a temporary worker, a consultant, or a contractor. This article uses data from the NLSY because addressing the issues of concern requires longer term longitudinal information as well as current information.

The National Longitudinal Survey of Youth data set began in 1979, with a national sample of men and women whose ages ranged from 14 through 21 as of January 1 of that year. These individuals were interviewed annually through 1994.³ In the latter year, the sample consisted of 8,891 respondents, including oversamples

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of blacks and Hispanics.⁴ The NLSY contains detailed information about many aspects of respondents' lives, including their labor market experiences, fertility, and changes in marital status over the years. One particular strength of the data set is that it records much of the information as event histories; thus, the dates of occurrences and transitions are documented, and this information is updated with each interview. With respect to work history, the "start" and "stop" dates of each job the respondent has held are recorded, as well as dates of nonwork (such as maternity leave or layoff) within each job. This allows various job-related measures, such as the number of jobs held, weeks worked, and job tenure, to be calculated.⁵ Dates of births, as well as those of marriages, divorces, and other changes in marital status also are documented.

The wealth of longitudinal information in the NLSY allows the use of data on personal characteristics and life "events," and job information about workers before they began their current job to address the following issues: 1) During the period that preceded the start date of the current job, were there any aspects of work behavior or other "events" that may have affected the likelihood of later working in a nonstandard type of employment arrangement? The "events" and work behavior analyzed are change in marital status, birth of a child, number of jobs held, and percent of weeks worked. 2) How does the most recent job that the respondents held prior to their current job compare with the current one in terms of wages and hours? This speaks to the issue of whether the nonstandard work arrangements involve a relative "step up" or "step down."

Workers by employment arrangement

In 1994, respondents in the National Longitudinal Survey of Youth who had been employed since their 1993 (or previous) interview were asked whether they considered themselves a regular employee at their job, a temporary worker sent by a temporary help agency, a temporary worker hired directly by the company, a consultant, or a contractor. On the basis of this information concerning the main 1994 job, and the answers to questions about self-employment and usual hours worked per week, individuals were assigned to one of the following categories: full-time regular employee, part-time regular employee, self-employed regular employee, temporary agency employee, temporary direct hire employee, consultant, and contractor.⁶

It should be noted that the employment categories used in this article are not identical to those defined in other articles in this issue of the *Review*. Those articles, which are based on the CPS data set, define four groups of workers in "alternative" arrangements: independent contractors (this group also includes consultants and freelancers), on-call workers, tem-

porary help agency workers, and workers provided by contract firms.⁷ All other workers are combined into one employment group called "traditional." While temporary direct hire employees make up a distinct category in this article, the other articles include them in the "traditional" classification (if they do not fall into any "alternative" group). Given the differences in definitions, one should be cautious in interpreting comparisons by employment category of results from this article and the others.

The top panel of table 1 shows that about 3.9 percent of workers in the NLSY defined themselves as temporary agency employees, temporary direct hire employees, or contractors at their main job from the 1994 interview.⁸ (All of the comparisons that follow in this section are made relative to the full-time regular employment category.) Women were more likely to be part-time regular, temporary agency, and temporary direct hire employees, and less likely to be working as contractors.⁹ Blacks were less likely to be working as part-time regular employees and much more likely to be working as temporary agency employees. Both temporary agency and temporary direct hire employees were less likely to have a bachelor's degree or higher. The last row of the table's top panel indicates the percent of workers in each employment category with 3 years of tenure or less with their employer. Compared with the full-time regular employment category, every other employment category has a higher percent of workers with 3 years of tenure or less. Temporary agency and temporary direct hires have the highest percentages, with more than 90 percent each.

The discussion that follows centers on those workers with 3 years of tenure or less; the purpose of this restriction is to keep the comparisons focused on a short span of years. The breakdown of this subgroup of workers by various characteristics is shown in the bottom panel of table 1, with 6.9 percent of workers defined as temporary agency or direct hire employees, or contractors. As before, women were more likely to be working in regular part-time, temporary agency, and temporary direct hire employment arrangements. The results for blacks remain the same as those reported earlier for all workers aged 29 through 37. However, temporary direct hire employees were no longer less likely to have a bachelor's degree or higher.

Workers' prior attributes

Workers have various reasons for taking jobs in differing types of employment arrangements. For example, they may not be able to find permanent full-time jobs. Alternatively, work arrangements such as temporary, regular self-employed, or regular part-time may provide hours flexibility, which is important for individuals who have additional demands on their time (such as those who recently had a child). Tempo-

Table 1. Percent distribution of employed persons aged 29 to 37 years, total and for those with 3 years of tenure or less, by employment arrangements and selected characteristics, 1994

Characteristic	Total	Employment arrangement of main 1994 job					
		Regular			Nonstandard		
		Full-time job	Part-time job	Self-employed	Temporary worker		Contractor
Agency supplied	Direct hire						
All persons aged 29 to 37 years							
Total	100.0	76.8	12.0	7.3	0.9	1.4	1.6
Sex, race, and Hispanic origin:							
Men	54.5	59.5	19.6	65.4	39.1	41.4	72.6
Women	45.5	40.5	80.4	34.6	60.9	58.6	27.4
White	81.0	80.0	84.5	86.9	58.6	74.1	86.9
Black	12.7	13.4	10.3	8.5	33.2	18.7	8.8
Hispanic origin	6.3	6.6	5.1	4.5	8.2	7.2	4.3
Educational attainment:							
Less than a high school diploma	9.5	9.1	10.1	12.4	8.3	15.1	11.7
High school graduate, no college	42.9	43.4	44.1	33.7	57.2	39.5	42.7
Less than a bachelor's degree	22.3	21.5	23.1	27.9	19.7	31.0	27.5
College graduate	25.2	26.0	22.8	26.1	14.7	14.4	18.2
Job tenure:							
Three years or less	44.8	40.7	60.9	56.1	92.7	93.2	61.2
Persons aged 29 to 37 years, with 3 years of tenure or less							
Total	100.0	69.8	16.3	7.0	1.9	2.8	2.2
Sex, race, and Hispanic origin:							
Men	52.3	59.5	23.2	57.7	39.3	40.4	62.4
Women	47.7	40.5	76.8	42.3	60.7	59.6	37.6
White	79.0	77.8	83.3	83.5	57.8	76.5	86.2
Black	14.3	15.1	11.3	10.3	34.7	16.7	10.1
Hispanic origin	6.7	7.2	5.4	6.2	7.5	6.8	3.7
Educational attainment:							
Less than a high school diploma	13.3	13.4	12.9	11.9	8.1	14.4	15.6
High school graduate, no college	43.1	43.0	46.8	35.1	57.8	40.8	29.2
Less than a bachelor's degree	21.9	21.0	20.8	29.3	20.6	29.8	32.1
College graduate	21.7	22.6	19.5	23.7	13.4	15.0	23.0

NOTE: Data refer to the main or primary job from the 1994 interview. Detail may not sum to 100 due to rounding.

SOURCE: National Longitudinal Survey of Youth.

rary work arrangements also may provide a path of entry or reentry into the labor market for some, and allow workers to learn about various fields and job types.

This section focuses on “events” and work behavior that occurred over the 2-year period that preceded the start date of the main job reported in the 1994 interview; these occurrences may have influenced the likelihood of working in a nonstandard type of employment arrangement. The variables describing “events” are the birth of a child, change in marital status to a married or remarried state, and change in marital status

to a separated or divorced state. They indicate whether workers who had these types of changes in their lives were relatively more likely to work subsequently in certain employment arrangements. The variables that are used to capture aspects of work behavior are the percent of weeks worked and the number of jobs held. These could suggest whether workers in certain types of employment arrangements had lesser labor force attachment or held a relatively high number of jobs before the current one. The detailed aspect of the National Longitudinal Survey of Youth data set, which in-

cludes job start and stop dates, as well as dates of children's births and marital status changes, allows the calculation of these variables for the 2-year period preceding the start of the main 1994 job.¹⁰

Table 2 shows the distribution of workers by employment category of the main 1994 job for the following "events" (or nonevents): remained unmarried, marital status changed to married, remained married, marital status changed to unmarried, no birth of a child, and birth of a child. Each of the four marital status columns is mutually exclusive, as are the two birth columns. This allows a comparison between the distributions of workers by main 1994 employment category for those who did or did not experience a certain "event" in their lives during the 2 years that preceded the main 1994 job. Because the effects of the "events" may differ for men and women, the table also depicts these distributions separately by sex.¹¹ All workers have 3 years of tenure or less at their main 1994 job.

According to table 2, it appears that workers who had had a child in the 2 years before the start of their job were not more (or less) likely than those who had not to work subsequently in a full-time regular employment arrangement. However, this masks some differences in work behavior between the sexes. Specifically, women who had given birth in the preceding 2 years were much less likely than were women who had not to be in a regular full-time employment arrangement at the main 1994 job.¹² This lends some support to the hypothesis that the other types of work arrangements (for example, regular self-employment)

allow more flexibility, which can be important for those who have recently had a child. The table shows no effect for men—men who had had a child in the preceding 2 years were not more or less likely than were men who had not to be in a regular full-time employment arrangement at the main 1994 job. Table 2 also indicates that women who had had a change in their marital status to separated, divorced, or widowed during the 2 years that preceded the start of their main 1994 job were more likely to work subsequently in a full-time regular employment arrangement (and much less likely to work in a

Table 2. Percent distribution of employed persons aged 29 to 37 years with 3 years of tenure or less, by employment arrangements, sex, and prior events that may have affected choice of arrangements, 1994

Sex and employment arrangement of main 1994 job	Prior events that may have affected choice of employment arrangements					
	Marital status				Birth of a child	
	Remained unmarried	Changed to married, remarried, or reunited	Remained married	Changed to separated, widowed, or divorced	No	Yes
Total, aged 29 to 37 years ...	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Regular job:						
Full-time	73.8	78.9	65.0	72.0	70.4	65.9
Part-time	12.6	11.1	20.5	12.5	16.5	14.7
Self-employed	6.5	4.4	7.9	5.5	6.4	11.0
Nonstandard job:						
Temporary worker						
Agency supplied	2.2	1.5	1.7	1.9	1.9	1.7
Direct hire	2.6	.6	2.8	7.0	2.7	3.5
Contractor	2.4	3.5	2.1	1.1	2.1	3.3
Men, aged 29 to 37 years ...	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Regular job:						
Full-time	77.3	85.8	81.8	74.5	78.9	83.0
Part-time	8.0	4.9	6.5	7.6	7.9	2.8
Self-employed	7.5	4.3	6.8	7.6	6.9	8.4
Nonstandard job:						
Temporary worker						
Agency supplied	1.8	.5	.8	3.3	1.6	.4
Direct hire	2.6	—	1.7	5.9	2.2	2.0
Contractor	2.8	4.6	2.5	1.2	2.5	3.4
Women, aged 29 to 37 years	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Regular job:						
Full-time	68.7	72.0	49.8	69.5	61.1	46.0
Part-time	19.4	17.3	33.1	17.4	25.9	28.5
Self-employed	5.0	4.5	8.9	3.4	5.9	13.9
Nonstandard job:						
Temporary worker						
Agency supplied	2.7	2.5	2.6	.5	2.3	3.2
Direct hire	2.6	1.1	3.8	8.1	3.3	5.2
Contractor	1.7	2.5	1.8	1.0	1.6	3.1

NOTE: Data refer to the main or primary job from the 1994 interview. Prior events are those occurring over the 2 years before the start date of the main job. Detail may not sum to 100 due to rounding.

SOURCE: National Longitudinal Survey of Youth.

regular part-time employment arrangement) than were those who remained married. For men, there are no differences for these two employment categories.

Table 3 displays, by employment category of the main 1994 job and by sex, the average percent of weeks worked and average number of jobs held during the 2 years that preceded the start date of the main 1994 job.¹³ It appears that both temporary agency and temporary direct hire employees had spent much less time working during the 2 years preceding the start date of the main 1994 job, relative to full-time

regular employees or any other employment category. Interestingly, relative to full-time regular employees, both types of temporary workers did not hold a significantly different number of jobs during that 2-year period. When means are compared within sex, however, it appears that women in temporary agency work arrangements held relatively fewer jobs than did women in full-time regular work arrangements.

Both part-time and self-employed regular employees had a lower average percent of weeks worked relative to full-time regular employees. It appears that, among men, only self-employed workers did not spend significantly less time working in the 2 years preceding the start date of the main 1994 job, relative to full-time regular employees. Among women, those in all other categories spent less time working than did full-time regular employees. In all employment categories, men spent a higher percentage of time working in the 2 years preceding the start date of the main 1994 job than did women; the difference is particularly great for the regular self-employed category and for both temporary worker employment categories.

In summary, it appears that, relative to full-time regular employees, workers in all other employment categories (except for self-employed men and contractors) spent a smaller percentage of time working in the 2 years preceding the start of the main job. This is one of the strongest patterns found overall among the variables examined in this section. It is also interesting that, relative to full-time regular employees, workers in the other work arrangements did not hold a higher number of jobs during those previous 2 years. The sex differences in the impact of the birth of a child variable also are informative. Women who had had a child in the preceding 2 years were much less likely than women who had not to be in

a regular full-time employment arrangement at the main 1994 job; this was not true for men. The results for women speak to the issue of the possible flexibility of the other types of work arrangements.

Current and previous jobs compared

This section examines the hourly wages and hours per week of workers' main 1994 jobs, and also looks at whether workers had held a job during the 2 years before the start date of their main 1994 job; comparisons are made by employment category and sex. For those workers who had held a previous job during the 2 years before the start date of their main 1994 job, the following variables are examined by employment category and sex: the hourly wage at the main 1994 job minus the hourly wage at the most recent previous job, the hours per week at the main 1994 job minus the hours per week at the most recent previous job, the years of tenure at the previous job, and the number of weeks without work between the end of the previous job and the start of the main 1994 job. As above, this analysis relates only to those workers whose tenure on their main 1994 job was 3 years or less.

Table 4 displays the average hourly wage, average hours per week, and percent of workers who had held a job during the 2 years before the start of the main 1994 job, by employment category.¹⁴ This information also is further broken down by sex. Overall, it appears that regular part-time, temporary agency, and temporary direct hire employees have a lower average hourly wage than do full-time regular employees. This finding still holds when the data are broken down by sex. In addition, workers in all employment categories average fewer hours per week than do full-time regular employ-

Table 3. Employed persons aged 29 to 37 years with 3 years or less of tenure, by employment arrangements, sex, and prior work behavior, 1994

Employment arrangement of main 1994 job	Prior work behavior and sex					
	Total		Men		Women	
	Average percent of weeks worked	Average number of jobs held	Average percent of weeks worked	Average number of jobs held	Average percent of weeks worked	Average number of jobs held
Total	70.5	1.9	77.1	2.1	63.2	1.7
Regular job:						
Full-time	75.9	2.0	78.7	2.1	71.8	1.8
Part-time	57.5	1.6	63.5	2.0	55.7	1.5
Self-employed	62.4	1.8	75.2	2.0	47.9	1.5
Nonstandard job:						
Temporary worker						
Agency supplied ..	46.1	1.7	69.2	2.3	31.2	1.4
Direct hire	48.4	1.7	67.0	1.9	35.9	1.7
Contractor	68.5	2.0	(1)	(1)	(1)	(1)

¹ Due to the small number of unweighted observations in the contractor cell, breakdowns by sex are not shown.

work behavior refers to that occurring over the 2 years before the start of the main job.

NOTE: Data refer to the main or primary job from the 1994 interview. Prior

SOURCE: National Longitudinal Survey of Youth.

Table 4. Employment arrangements and characteristics of main 1994 job held by employed persons aged 29 to 37 years with 3 years or less of tenure, by sex, 1994

Employment arrangement of main 1994 job	Average hourly wage in 1994 dollars			Average hours per week			Percent who held a job during prior 2 years		
	Total	Men	Women	Total	Men	Women	Total	Men	Women
Total	\$11.12	\$12.33	\$9.80	40.1	44.0	35.7	92.2	96.4	87.6
Regular job:									
Full-time	11.64	12.38	10.56	44.5	46.0	42.4	94.8	96.6	92.1
Part-time	9.20	10.51	8.81	22.7	24.2	22.2	84.2	94.2	81.2
Self-employed	12.40	15.86	8.45	38.4	43.1	33.0	91.3	96.5	85.5
Nonstandard job:									
Temporary worker									
Agency supplied	7.61	7.78	7.50	37.4	40.2	35.7	82.9	98.7	72.7
Direct hire	8.57	9.36	7.99	34.3	38.9	31.1	86.6	92.8	82.3
Contractor	11.62	(1)	(1)	40.3	(1)	(1)	86.9	(1)	(1)

¹ Due to the small number of unweighted observations in the contractor cell, breakdowns by sex are not shown.

NOTE: Data refer to the main or primary job from the 1994 interview. Prior

work behavior refers to that occurring over the 2 years before the start of the main job.

SOURCE: National Longitudinal Survey of Youth.

ees. Within the full-time and self-employed regular employment categories, men have higher hourly wages than do women, on average; within all employment categories, men average more hours per week than women do.

Relative to male full-time regular employees, the percent of men who held a job the 2 years before the start of the main 1994 job in each other employment category (part-time regular, self-employed regular, temporary agency and temporary direct hire) does not differ (table 4). However, each of the employment categories shows a lower percent of women having held a previous job during the 2 years before the start of the main job than is the case for the women in the full-time regular employment category. This suggests that women may find these other types of employment categories useful as an inroad to the labor market.

For those who had held a job during the 2 years before the start of the main 1994 job, a comparison is done of the magnitudes of wage changes (hourly wage of the main 1994 job minus hourly wage of the previous job) and hours changes (hours per week of the main 1994 job minus hours per week of the previous job) across the various employment classifications.¹⁵ The purpose is to address the issue of whether the main 1994 job is a relative “step up” or a “step down” in terms of wages and hours. Table 5 displays, by employment category of the main 1994 job and by sex, the number of weeks without work between the end of the previous job and the start of the main 1994 job, years of tenure at the previous job, the hourly wage at the main 1994 job minus the hourly wage of the previous job (wage change), and the hours per week at the main 1994 job minus the hours per week of the most recent previous job (hours change).

The table indicates that relative to full-time regular employees, part-time regular, self-employed regular, temporary

agency, and temporary direct hire employees had a larger gap between the stop date of the previous job and the start date of the main 1994 job. When the data are broken down by sex, this finding remains for women, but for men, it remains only for those in part-time regular jobs. In addition, in all employment categories except regular part-time, women had a larger average number of weeks without work between the end of the previous job and start of the main job than did men; the difference is particularly large for those in regular self-employed and temporary agency employment arrangements.

Relative to male and female full-time regular employees, the average change in hours between the main 1994 job and the previous job is different only for male and female part-time regular employees and female self-employed regular employees. This suggests that the change in hours among employees in most of the other work arrangements was not significantly different from the change in hours for those in the full-time regular employment arrangement. For men, relative to full-time regular employees, the only significant difference in the average change in hourly wages between the main job and the previous job is for regular self-employed workers, with the regular self-employed doing better in terms of wage growth. However, among women in the regular part-time, regular self-employed, and temporary agency categories, the main 1994 job appears to be a relative “step down” in terms of wage growth when these workers are compared with regular full-time employees.

THE DATA PRESENTED HERE from the National Longitudinal Survey of Youth have been used to examine a number of issues regarding workers in different employment arrangements. Among the more salient findings: Relative to the full-time regular employment situation, women are more likely than

men to be found in certain employment arrangements—specifically, part-time regular, temporary agency, and temporary direct hire situations. Men and women in part-time regular, temporary agency, and temporary direct hire employment arrangements, as well as women in the self-employed regular employment arrangement, spent less time working than did regular full-time employees during the 2 years before they took their current job—a finding that indicates relatively less work experience during the period for these individuals. In all of these employment categories, however, men spent a higher percentage of time working during those 2 years than did women. Women who had given birth during the preceding 2 years were much less likely to be in a regular full-time work arrangement at their main 1994 job than were women who did not have a birth, implying that other types of work arrangements provide more flexibility than full-time regular work arrangements.

Finally, the average change in hours between the previous job and the main 1994 job was different only for men and women who worked in the regular part-time employment arrangement and women in the self-employed regular arrangement, relative to the changes for those in the full-time regular employment arrangement. For men, no employment arrangement had significantly lower average wage growth than the full-time regular employment situation. However, women who were regular part-time, regular self-employed, and temporary agency employees had a relatively smaller average wage change than did their counterparts in full-time regular employment; this suggests that their main 1994 job is a relative “step down” with respect to wage growth. □

Table 5. Comparison of the previous job and the main 1994 job held by employed persons aged 29 to 37 years with tenure of 3 years or less, by sex, 1994

Sex and employment arrangement of main 1994 job	Average number of weeks worked between end of previous job and start of main job	Average years of tenure at previous job	Average hourly wage of main job minus hourly wage of previous job (1994 dollars)	Average hours per week of main job minus hours per week of previous job
Total, aged 29 to 37 years	11.2	2.4	\$1.06	1.3
Regular job:				
Full-time	9.4	2.5	1.13	3.4
Part-time	15.3	2.2	.21	-9.2
Self-employed	16.0	2.6	3.21	1.4
Nonstandard job:				
Temporary worker				
Agency supplied	21.9	1.3	-.43	2.8
Direct hire	14.3	1.5	1.68	.0
Contractor	13.7	2.5	-.50	2.5
Men, aged 29 to 37 years	9.3	2.5	1.23	1.5
Regular job:				
Full-time	8.6	2.5	1.04	2.5
Part-time	16.5	2.4	-.13	-11.3
Self-employed	9.5	3.2	5.99	2.4
Nonstandard job:				
Temporary worker				
Agency supplied	10.8	1.1	.17	1.3
Direct hire	7.8	1.9	2.49	-1.9
Women, aged 29 to 37 years	13.5	2.2	.86	1.2
Regular job:				
Full-time	10.8	2.4	1.26	4.9
Part-time	14.9	2.2	.33	-8.5
Self-employed	24.3	1.7	-.65	.0
Nonstandard job:				
Temporary worker				
Agency supplied	31.5	1.5	-.98	4.2
Direct hire	19.3	1.1	1.00	1.5

NOTE: Data refer to the main or primary job from the 1994 interview. Previous job refers to the most recent job held over the 2 years before the start date of the main job.
SOURCE: National Longitudinal Survey of Youth.

because they provide the flexibility to adjust the work force quickly when product demand conditions change, and permit employers to benefit from lower hiring and training costs, to pay lower wages and benefits, and to hire temporarily workers with expertise in a particular area (such as consultants). Many of these employer- and employee-sided rationales are described in Anne E. Polivka and Thomas Nardone, “On the definition of ‘contingent work,’” *Monthly Labor Review*, December 1989, pp. 9–16.

³ After 1994, respondents to the National Longitudinal Survey of Youth will be interviewed on a biennial basis.

⁴ In this article, 1994 sample weights are used in all computations to adjust for differing sampling and nonresponse rates; this ensures that the data are nationally representative of the relevant age cohort.

⁵ In addition, because the dates of these job-related behaviors are recorded for each individual, these variables can be calculated for a specific period—for example, the number of jobs each worker held during the 2 years before the start date of a certain job can be determined.

⁶ Full-time regular employees are defined as those working at least 35 hours per week; part-time regular employees are those working fewer than

Footnotes

¹ For example, see Louis Uchitelle and N.R. Kleinfeld, “On the Battlefields of Business, Millions of Casualties,” *The New York Times*, Mar. 3, 1996, pp. 1, 26–29; and Lewis M. Segal and Daniel G. Sullivan, “The Temporary Labor Force,” *Economic Perspectives*, vol. 19, no. 2, 1995, pp. 2–19.

² Employers may prefer nonstandard types of employment relationships

35 hours per week. The main job from the 1994 interview is defined as the most recent job since the 1993 or previous interview (and the job in which the individual worked the most hours, if he or she held dual jobs). The stop date for the main job could be between January 1993 and December 1994, although it is between June and October of 1994 for the majority of individuals because that was the period during which most of the respondents had their 1994 interview.

⁷ They define an “alternative” work arrangement as one that is either intermediated through a third party, such as a temporary agency or contract company, or one in which work potentially arrives in an irregular manner.

⁸ The employment classification for the main job used throughout this article is that reported at the 1994 interview. It is possible that some workers changed employment classifications over time. For example, about 8.1 percent of full-time regular employees report that before they became a regular employee at their job, they worked as either a temporary worker, a consultant, or a contractor for the same employer. Each variable in table 1, and all others, is based on responses from those individuals who reported valid data for that variable. There are only 21 unweighted observations in the consultant category, and they thus have been excluded. The 34 individuals who defined themselves as employees of contractors were classified as either full-time or part-time regular employees. The CPS shows 1.1 percent of workers aged 29 to 37 to be temporary help agency employees, while the NLSY shows 0.9 percent in the same category. In addition, the CPS has about 6.2 percent of workers in this age group defined as “independent contractors” (which includes consultants and freelancers), while the NLSY has 1.6 percent defined as contractors (and 0.4 percent as consultants). The disparity could be due to

the differences in the employment category definitions as well as in the wording of the questions. Additionally, year of the interview and seasonality may play roles because the CPS response is for February of 1995, while that from the NLSY was obtained, for the most part, between the months of June and October of 1994.

⁹ All inferences reported are statistically significant at the 95-percent confidence level.

¹⁰ The definition of a job is a period of work with a specific employer; for self-employed workers, the workers themselves define each “new” job.

¹¹ See Francine D. Blau and Marianne A. Ferber, *The Economics of Women, Men, and Work*, 2nd. ed. (Englewood Cliffs, NJ, Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1992), for a discussion of sex differences in labor market transitions, attachment, and job types.

¹² Rebecca Blank, “The Role of Part-Time Work in Women’s Labor Market Choices Over Time,” *American Economic Review*, May 1989, pp. 295–99, looks at how marital status changes, birth of a child, and children’s ages affect women’s choices of job categories.

¹³ There are only 36 unweighted observations for men and 25 for women in the contractor classification, and they thus have been excluded from tables with breakdowns by sex.

¹⁴ All wage data are in 1994 dollars; hourly wages are restricted to be between \$2 and \$60 and hours per week are restricted to be between 1 and 98.

¹⁵ Segal and Sullivan, “The Temporary Labor Force,” examine wage changes for those in the personnel supply industry.