The NLSY

Using Secondary Data for Analysis of Marriage and Family
June 18th, 2009

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Overview

- ## What is the NLSY?
  - The NLSY79
  - The NLS79 Children and Young Adults
  - The NLSY97

- ## What makes the NLSY unique?

- ## Research illustrations/New Data

- ## Accessing a wealth of information

Early Cohorts*

- Mature Men 45-59 in 1966 – to study shrinking LFP of prime-aged men (discontinued in 1990)
- Young Men 14-24 in 1966 – problem of unemployment among youth (discontinued in 1981)
- Women 30-44 in 1967 – to study the return of women to the labor force as children grew up (discontinued in 2003)
- Young Women 14-24 in 1968– We were gathering data on young men, but as the Women's Bureau said, why were we ignoring young women? (discontinued in 2003)
- * NLS focuses on people, not households

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The NLSY today

- The NLSY79 (main youth)

- The NLSY79 child and young adults (all children born to NLSY79 main youth women)

- The NLSY97

NLSY79 Sample

1979:   Start: 12,686 men and women 14 to 21 as of 12/31/1978

               Sample included all household members in age range

               in each HH sampled

               Oversamples: Blacks, Hispanics, poor whites and military

1984-1985: Loss of most military oversample cases

1990-1991: Loss of poor white oversample cases

1994:   Last annual interview, biennial from then on

2006:   Interviewed 7749 respondents, over 80% of actively

               fielded sample

- 23 survey points covering ~100% of female childbearing

- Age in 2008: 43-51

Child Study

- NLSY79 collected extensive data on fertility, child health & child care – funded by NICHD
- In 1986 the Child Study began, assessing the children of the female respondents every other year to age 14.

Types & modes of assessments

Two types of assessments:

1. Established scales
2. Other indicators of child wellbeing – some scaled, some individual items

Three modes of data collection:

1. Interviewer-administrated to child (in Child Supplement)
2. Mother report (in Mother Supplement)
3. Interviewer observation

The assessment domains: What do they measure?

- Cognitive – memory; math & reading achievement, word reception & recognition

- Socioemotional – developmental milestones; temperament; perceived self-competence

- Behavioral – prosocial; behavior problems; peer conflicts; risk taking

- Physical Health & Development – hgt & wgt measurements; self-reports

Cognitive: Interviewer-administered

- Memory - Wechsler Digit Span

- Achievement/Ability:

  – PIAT Math

  – PIAT Reading

- Vocabulary recognition/retention: PPVT-R
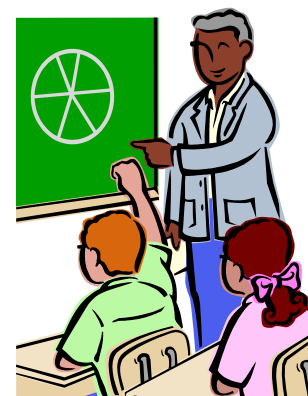
Cognitive assessments for little kids

- Short-term memory:

  - McCarthy Verbal Memory

  - Memory for Location

- Receptive vocabulary:

  - Body Parts

Socioemotional Assessments

- Motor & Social Development (MSD) – from NHIS

- Temperament (What My Child is Like) – from Rothbart, Campos, and Kagan

- Self-Perception Profile for Children (SPPC) – Harter scales

Other socioemotional measures

- Child moods: Child 10-14 in Child Self-Administered Supplement

- Risk aversion scales: Child 10-14 report in CSAS

- Shyness: Interviewer-report in Child Supplement
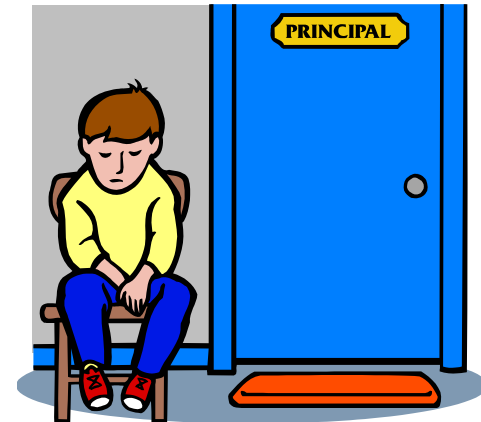
- Psych referral: Mother-report

Behavioral, Mother Report

Behavior Problems Index (BPI)

- – Measures incidence and severity of child behavior problems

- – Global Measure & subscales:

    1. antisocial

    2. anxious or depressed

    3. hyperactive

    4. headstrong

    5. dependent

    6. peer conflicts

The HOME-SF Mother Report

Mother Report

– emotional and verbal responsiveness

– maternal acceptance of and involvement with her child

– organization of the environment

– presence of materials for learning

– variety of stimulation

Repeat Interviews: Children under age 15 as of 2004

Child Age	Number of Interviews								
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	Total
All Ethnicities									
<1 Year	11								11
1 Year	27								27
2 Years	24	16							40
3 Years	13	62							75
4 Years	12	30	51						93
5 Years	5	20	97						122
6 Years	10	15	73	52					150
7 Years	17	12	30	146					205
8 Years	9	15	23	95	73				215
9 Years	11	20	21	38	141				231
10 Years	12	18	17	34	113	92			286
11 Years	13	15	23	21	56	203			331
12 Years	10	17	21	16	48	151	119		382
13 Years	12	11	18	15	33	94	223		406
14 Years	17	6	17	24	33	53	152	135	437
Total	203	257	391	441	497	593	494	135	3011
Hispanic									
Total	50	71	100	95	109	106	81	21	633
Black									
Total	58	56	80	104	127	158	108	29	720
Non-Black, Non-Hispanic									
Total	95	130	211	242	261	329	305	85	1658

Pooling Samples

Children Age 0-14			
Pooled Age Groups 1986-2004	**Possible n**	**Males**	**Females**
0 year olds	2,661	1389	1272
1 year olds	3,027	1538	1489
2 year olds	3,220	1624	1596
3 year olds	3,444	1738	1706
4 year olds	3,569	1810	1759
5 year olds	3,665	1875	1790
6 year olds	3,657	1865	1792
7 year olds	3,697	1884	1813
8 year olds	3,630	1819	1811
9 year olds	3,546	1802	1744
10 year olds	3,453	1739	1714
11 year olds	3,295	1685	1610
12 year olds	3,063	1556	1507
13 year olds	2,880	1469	1411
14 year olds	1,609	805	804

Young Adults are NLSY79 Children – only older

- Those children who turn 15 or are older in the survey year get an interview much like the one their mothers received in 1979. This is funded by NICHD through the BLS contract to CHRR and NORC.

- When the "children" turn 21, beginning in 2000, their surveys have been funded by a grant from NICHD.

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NLSY79 Young Adults

- Biennial surveys 1994-2008
- Age in 2008: 14 (will be 15 by end of calendar year) – 37 (1 respondent)
- N in 2008: 6313 and #s growing!

- Age of mothers of these young adults

Young Adult Age at 2006 Interview by Age of Mother at Birth of Young Adult and by Race/Ethnicity

Age of YA	Age of Mother at Child's Birth								
	11-13	14-16	17-19	20-22	23-25	26-29	30+	Total	Mean
All Young Adults									
14-17	0	0	0	0	176	775	430	1381	27.0
18-20	0	0	0	174	504	553	29	1260	28.2
21-24	0	1	271	690	562	151	0	1675	25.2
25+	5	273	724	468	58	0	0	1528	18.6
Total	5	274	995	1332	1300	1479	459	5844	25.1

Young Adult Survey Content

- **Questions parallel to the current NLSY79 and NLSY97 – for example**
    - Household Record
    - Employer Supplements, Military Service and Gaps
    - Fertility
    - Income (less assets)
    - Training
    - Assessments e.g. Rosenberg Self-Esteem, and CESD

Young Adult Survey Content

- **Continued or Parallel questions from the Child Survey**
  - Health (routine checks, accidents and injuries)
  - Dating
  - Relationship with parents
  - Some parent/child interaction
  - Risk Taking
  - School Experience and Satisfaction
  - Computer Use

Young Adult Survey Content

- **Tailored questions for this age group**
  - Information about fathers, especially non-residential ones
  - Timing of and Reasons for leaving home
  - Contact with parents as YAs leave home
  - Marriage and Cohabitation History
  - High School and College experiences
  - Transition into the world of work
  - Current childcare usage and cost
  - Greater detail on non-normative activity such as substance use and criminal behavior
  - Greater detail on sexual activity

Changes to Young Adult Survey

- **Major redesign for the 2000 survey**
  - Switch to telephone as primary mode
  - Questions with complex answer choices broken down into multiple questions
  - Key questions from Self-Report Booklet converted into CATI/CAPI instrument
  - New areas added:
    - Closeness to Parents
    - Greater migration sequence
    - Movement into and out of parent's home
    - Ever homeless
    - Monetary contributions to noncoresidentional children added to fertility
    - Parenting Attitudes added to fertility

Changes to Young Adult Survey

- **Major redesign for the 2000 survey (continued...)**
  - New areas added:
    - Modified HOME questions asked about youngest child of respondent in the household
    - Total family income and financial strain
    - Addiction to and workplace use of marijuana
    - Amphetamine usage as a separate series for the first time

Changes to Young Adult Survey

- **Redesign for the 2002 survey**

  - New questions in Military to find out whether/when reservists had been called into active duty

  - Questions about part-time, irregular employment added for younger YAs parallel to those asked in CSAS

Changes to Young Adult Survey

- **Redesign for the 2004 survey included:**
  - Household Record redesigned to reduce interviewer error
  - Marriage history of spouse/partners asked
  - Children from other relationships of spouse/partners asked
  - Monetary contributions of nonresidential parents asked for each biological child
  - Home Items revised and asked of all children in the HH tied to the YA
  - Questions about household division of labor and economic enmeshment added for YAs with spouse/partners
  - Questions about serious but not cohabiting relationships added
  - Asthma series added

Changes to Young Adult Survey

- **Redesign for the 2006 survey includes:**

  – Catastrophic events series added
  – Questions on assets and debts expanded
  – Series on financial help with living expenses added
  – Ten-Item Personality Inventory added
  – Family conflict series added
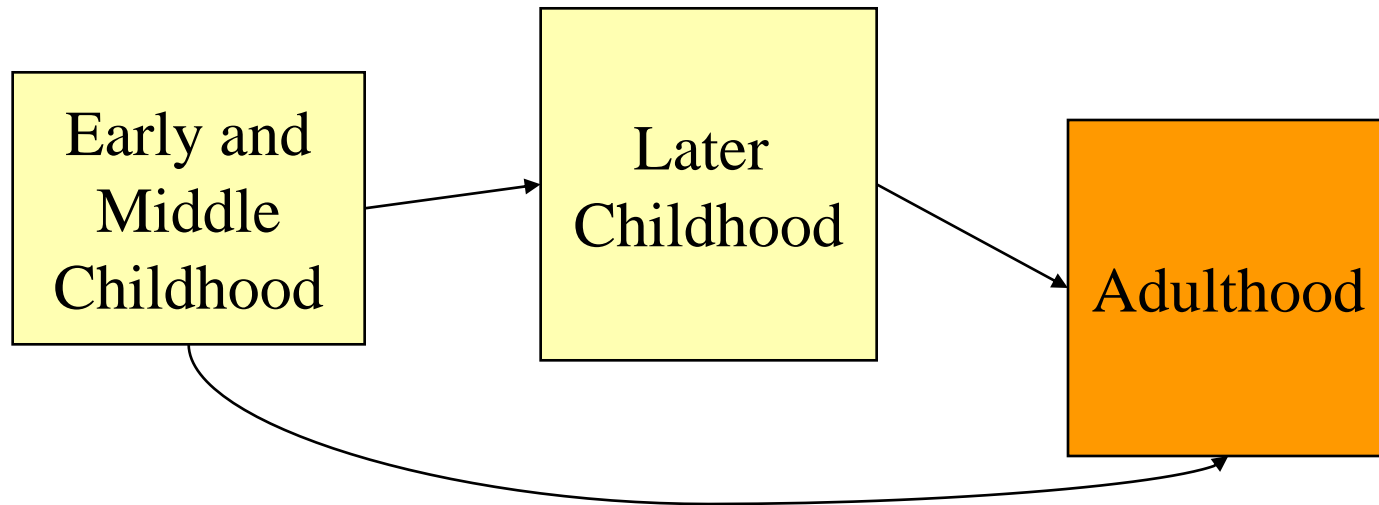 – Series of political questions added

.... And for 2008

- Only interview biennially through age 30 then every approx. 4 years
- Action in combat zones
- Where biological children lived at birth
- 6 item anger scale
- Healthy activities
- Relationship and dating activities from qualitative data
- Political questions

Research Possibilities

Child – Young Adult Connections

- Child obesity → YA health & employment outcomes

- Child school & achievement → YA educational attainment & labor force participation

- YA consequences of Child substance use

- Transmission of Attitudes, Behaviors and Beliefs over time

- Deviance across time and across generations: Child BPI & delinquent behavior→ YA delinquency & crime

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Cross-Generational Research Possibilities
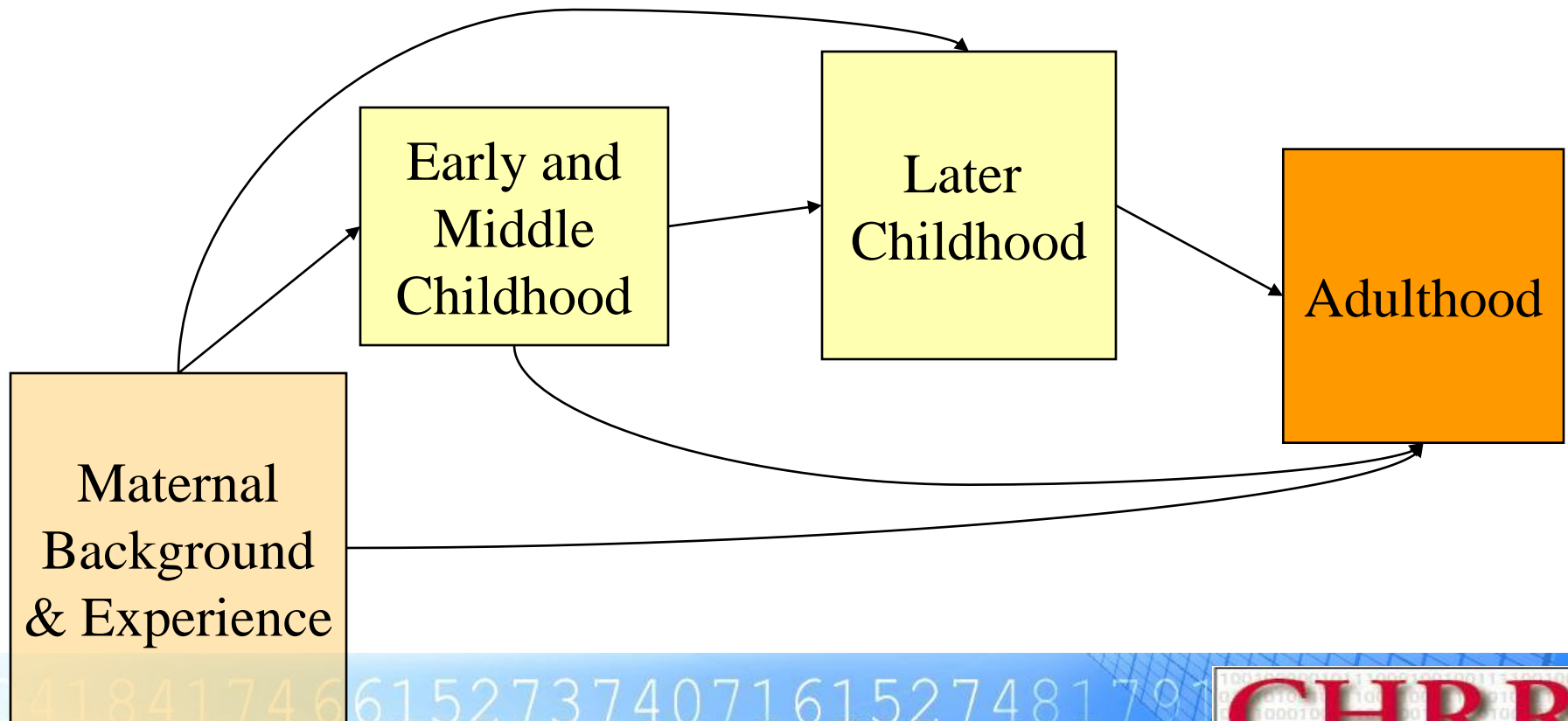
NLSY97

- 12-17 in 1997
- Annual surveys 1997-08
- Most recent available data: 2006/07 (R10)
- Age in R10: 21-26
- Round 11 due out in August 2009

Following Youth through Later Adolescence/Early Adulthood

NLSY79   14-16 (1979) → 24-26 (1989) 10 surveys

NLSY-YA   14-16 (1994+) →   24-26 (2004+) 5 surveys

NLSY97   14-16 (1996) → 24-26 (2006)   10 surveys

Why NLS Data on Marriage are Valuable

Key Features:

- timing of marriage and other events in respondents' lives

- repeated observations

- ability to merge in geographic information

Topics for which NLS Marriage Data have been Used:

- Marriage and child-bearing
- Marital search and marriage
- Marriage and labor market outcomes
- Effect of marriage on child outcomes
- Marital disruptions and remarriage
- Marriage and health
- Marriage and alcohol/drug use
- Marriage and Income

Listings in NLS Bibliography on Unions

Keyword	Count
Marital Conflict	2
Marital Disruption	85
Marital Dissolution	52
Marital Instability	25
Marital Satisfaction	18
Marital Status	414
Marriage	307
Cohabitation	62
Divorce	177

NLSY79

- Current marital status - asked in all years
- Two created variables specifying marital status at interview date

a. More complete (NEVER MARRIED, MARRIED, SEPARATED, DIVORCED, REMARRIED, WIDOWED)

b. Collapsed (NEVER MARRIED, MARRIED, SPOUSE PRESENT, OTHER)

Marital History—How data are collected

From 1980 on, data on marital changes are collected in an event history format

1. At each interview, respondents are reminded of their marital status at the date of the last interview and marital status at last interview is verified.

2. Asked, whether they had a change in marital status. If yes, the respondent is asked to report the type of the first change (marriage, divorce, etc.) and the date of that change in marital status.

Marital History—How data are collected

3. Asked if any other changes. If yes, asked to report the second change and the date of that change. This continues until respondent reports that there were no other changes.

Marriage Variables Created from Event History Data

Created variables indicating the beginning and ending dates (month and year) of marriages

- Start dates for up to 3 marriages

- End dates for up to 2 marriages

- Age at 1st marriage

- Number of months between first marriage and first birth

Number of Cohabiting Households in the United States

- 1970 - 1 million
- 1990 - 3 million
- 1998 - 5 million
- 2005 - 10 million

Cohabitation Data

- In all years, indicator of whether respondent is living with an opposite sex partner (comes from hh roster)
- 1990 and 1992 onwards
  - Month and year when respondent began living with opposite sex partner
  - Whether respondent lived with spouse before marriage
  - Month and year when respondent and spouse began living together

Cohabitation History

- Beginning in the 2002 survey, during any period of at least 3 months in which the respondent was unmarried, we collect spells of cohabitation that are at least 3 months in duration—including start and stop dates

Cohabitation/Relationship History-Created Variables

Based on the information in the household rosters …..

Two variables have been created for each year

1. NUMSPPTR—provides the id number of the current/most recent spouse or partner (takes values of 0 to 9)

2. RELSPPTR—provides the relationship of r to current spouse or partner

-999	Never reported a spouse/partner
0	No current spouse/partner
1	Spouse
33	Partner
36	Other

Cohabitation/Relationship History- Created Variables

<u>Caveats:</u>

Cannot tell whether these individuals were in the respondent's hh between rounds

Will have missed partners who were present for a short time between rounds

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- 1979 and 1997 marriage and cohabitation data

NLSY97

- Unlike the 1979 cohort which is now primarily a phone interview, and the Young Adult 21 and over which has always collected information by phone, 1997 is mostly in person.

NLSY97

The NLSY97 marriage section builds off of what was learned from the NLSY79 marriage section—but faces new challenges.

1. Important to know cohabitation as well as legal marital status.

2. Cohabitation dates may be more difficult for respondents to report. Cohabitation may be a gradual process.

3. Marriage implies two people of opposite sex, but cohabitation does not.

4. Marriage does not always mean cohabitation. In at least 10 cases in the NLSY97, the respondent had never lived with their spouse between marriage and subsequent interview.

Structure of NLSY97 Marriage and Cohabitation Section

The section in the NLSY97 is set up differently from that of the NLSY79.

- Concentrates on tracking cohabitation spells and captures marital transitions obliquely—asks whether married when began cohabitation and asks about changes in marital status within cohabitation

- Starts by defining cohabitation as "a sexual relationship in which partners of the opposite sex establish one household and live together."

- Then explicitly checks respondents marriage/cohab status at last interview

- It tries to roster any opposite-sex partner with whom the respondent lives and then record all changes in legal marital status for each relationship.

Marital Status

- Martial status at the time of the survey is collected
- Created variables that provide current marital and cohabitation status are available

Partner Roster

- At each survey respondents are asked to list each opposite-sex partner with whom the respondent had a sexual relationship and lived for at least one month

- For each partner on the list, the respondent is asked when s/he started and stopped living with this person

Partner Roster (continued)

- If partner is not in youth's current household, additional information is collected characteristics at time they started living together:

  (1) age

  (2) race and ethnicity

  (3) highest grade

  (4) whether employed

  (5) whether receiving government assistance

- Survey goes back through list of partners and collects dates at which changes in marital status occurred in relationship with each partner
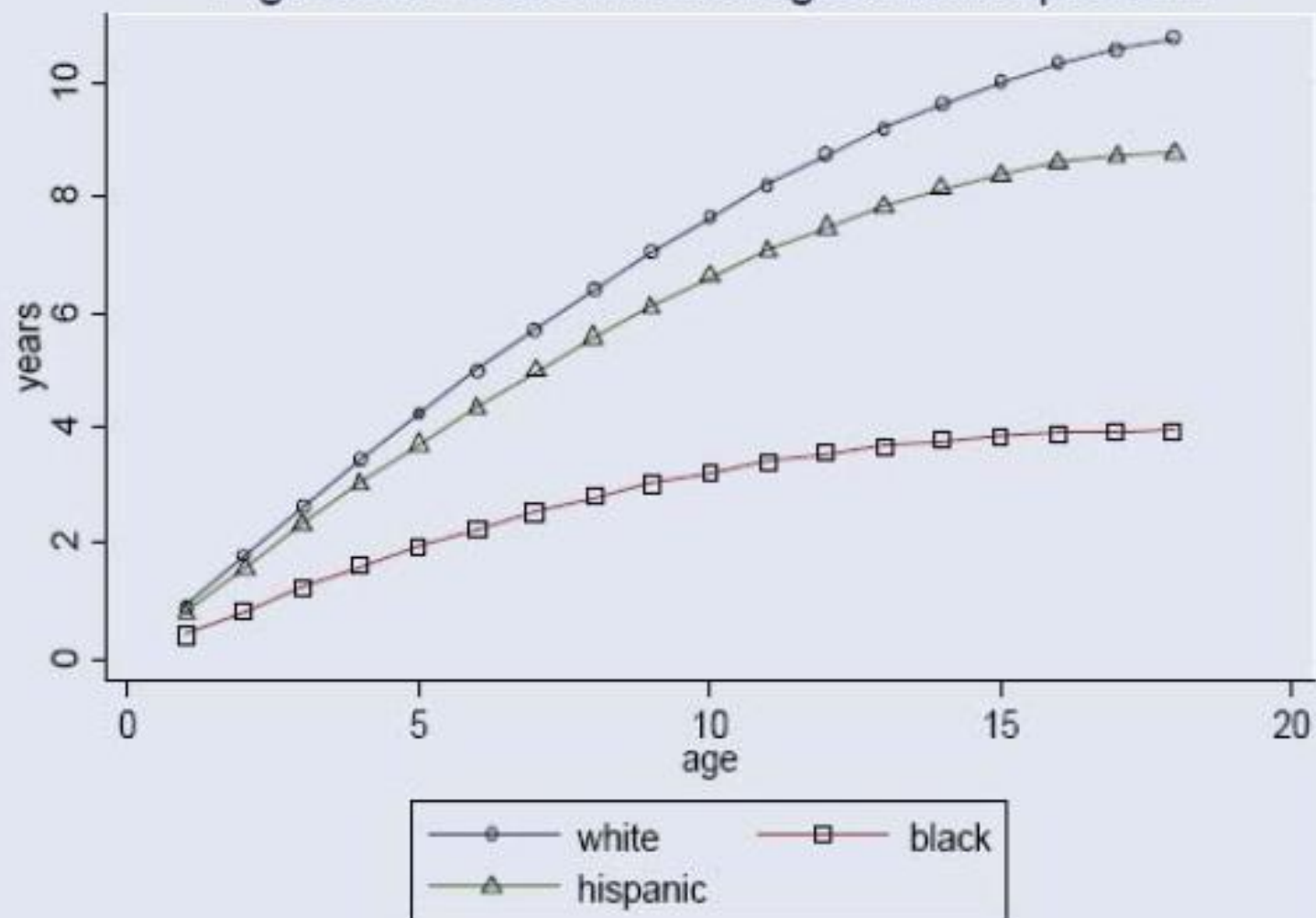
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Figure 1a: Years with biological father present

Figure 1b: Years with biological father present: single at birth
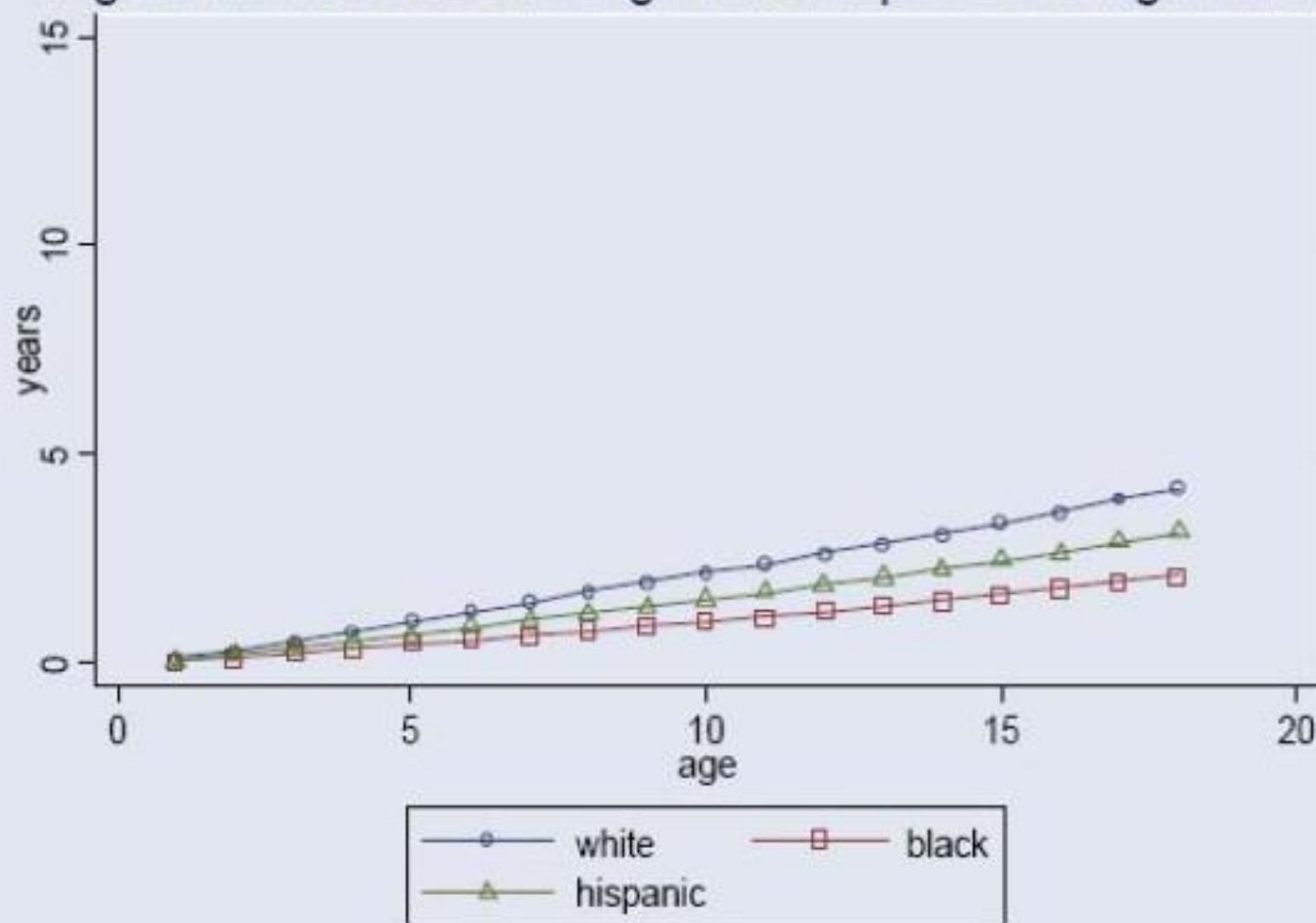
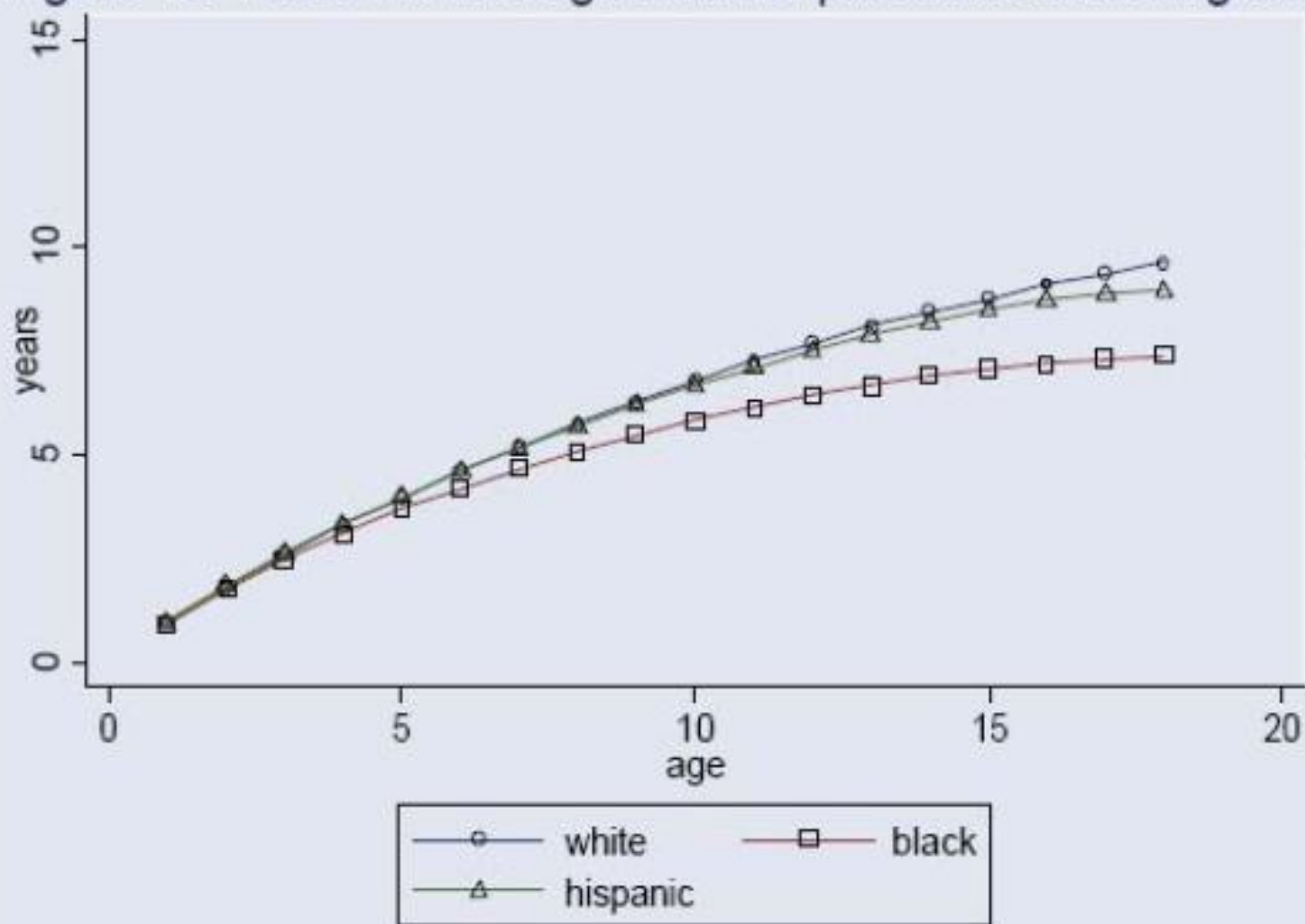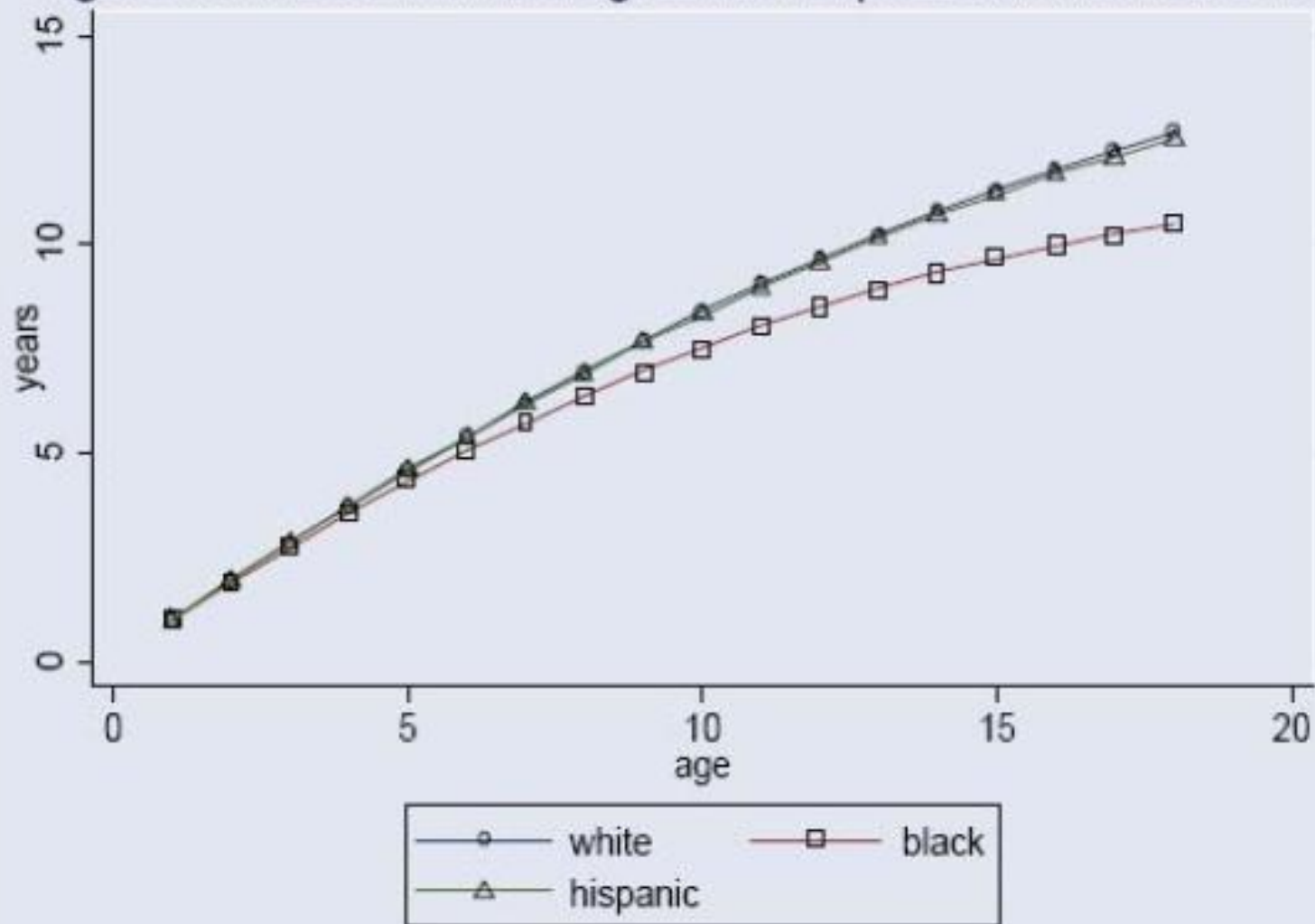Figure 1c: Years with biological father present: cohabiting at birth

Figure 1d: Years with biological father present: married at birth

So what is unique?

- Many rounds of the NLSY79 with broad range of data and amazing retention rates
- Ability to do intergenerational research by linking children/young adults to their mothers
- Ability to follow children from birth through early adulthood
- Ability to do cross-generational research by comparing NLSY79 and NLSY97 cohorts
- Think creatively comparing NLSY79 young adults with NLSY97 – Young adults have many years of data collected contemporaneously, NLSY97 are nationally representative.
- Geocoded data

Kinship data – Siblings & Cousins

Kinship information allows user to separate family household effects from individual characteristics.

Siblings

- Sample sizes: > 6000 full siblings; > 2000 half-siblings

- Fraternal & identical twins: >125 pairs as of 2000

Cousins - How are they identified?

- Children of NLSY79 main Youth mothers who are sisters (cousins)

- Children of NLSY79 main Youth mothers who are half-sisters (half cousins)

- Children of NLSY79 main Youth mothers who are themselves cousins (quarter-cousins)

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Accessing the data

- Always check the user's guide
- Always check years questions are asked
- Always check ages questions are asked
- Always check the universe for whom questions are pertinent

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