RESIDENTIAL AND OCCUPATIONAL PATTERNS OF ETHNIC MINORITIES IN NINETEENTH CENTURY PITTSBURGH

During the last two decades a number of sociologists and historians employed quantitative data to examine patterns of geographic and social mobility in nineteenth and twentieth century America. As early as 1959 sociologists Seymour Lipset and Reinhard Bendix provided a theoretical framework and a methodological approach with their study of mobility patterns in Oakland, California. Underscoring the importance of occupation as an indicator of social position and as a predictor of behavior, they argued that “how a person thinks and acts, as well as how he is regarded by others, is in large measure determined by his occupational experiences.”1 Otis Dudley Duncan and Peter Blau agreed, suggesting that “in the absence of hereditary castes or feudal estates, class differences came to rest primarily on occupational positions and the economic advantages and powers associated with them.” Occupational position, they concluded, while not encompassing all aspects of the concept of class, “is probably the best single indicator of it.”2 In addition, each sociologist carefully noted that a variety of conditions, such as social origin, education, and prior occupation experience exert a powerful influence on one’s chances for success in industrial society.

Sidney Goldstein demonstrated the importance of geographic mobility in his early analysis of occupational mobility in Norristown, Pennsylvania, illustrating the strong relationship between migration patterns and occupational success. More recent studies have considered additional variables in their analyses of social mobility in contemporary America. These sociological works produced a number of important dimensions to the concept of social mobility, particularly occupational role, social origin, and geographic movement.

Historians continue to disagree over the importance of occupation versus income as the most reliable measurement of one's social position. They have, however, provided historical perspective to the study of social mobility. The analyses of the mobility experiences of workers in cities in Massachusetts, New York, Pennsylvania, Nebraska, and Georgia during the nineteenth century suggest that common patterns existed in most American communities regardless of size or geographic location. Several studies also indicate that local economic conditions and ethnic background strongly influenced one's opportunities for success. Few first and second generation Irish workers in Boston during the late nineteenth century, for example, achieved occupational success during their lifetimes. Those who did succeed usually did so within the blue-collar strata.

Occupational mobility in Boston, as well as in other nineteenth century American cities, was restricted to the native-born and certain accepted immigrant groups. Moreover, geographic rather than occupational movement characterized the mobility patterns in each city. Large numbers of what Stephan Thernstrom called "floating proletariat," moved in and out of each city seeking occupational success and economic security.


5. Thernstrom, The Other Bostonians, pp. 133-135. In spite of their political success in the city of Boston, the Irish as a group, concludes Thernstrom, "ranked at the low end of the continuum of immigrant occupational achievement."
No studies to date, however, have examined the career patterns of ethnic minorities in highly dynamic, heavily industrialized inland American cities. Workers in expanding heavy industry cities, with large demands for manual laborers, may have experienced greater initial success in finding steady work, thus inducing greater geographic stability. This stability, in turn, might enhance one's opportunity for occupational success. This analysis of a sample of blue-collar workers in four industrial wards in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania between 1880 and 1920 illustrates the importance of economic conditions on social mobility.

Between 1880 and 1910 the city of Pittsburgh grew dramatically. Population growth, industrial expansion, transportation and housing technology, and political annexation all contributed to the dynamic pattern of late nineteenth century Pittsburgh.

In 1880 the city had a population of 156,389 and a density of 8.8 persons per acre. Within the next thirty years the area of the city increased by sixty percent, the population density doubled, and the population more than tripled. By 1910, nearly 534,000 people lived within the city with more than seventeen persons per acre of land. The Pittsburgh metropolitan area contained over one million persons, ranking fifth in the nation. The land area of the city, similarly, increased from 17,472 acres in 1880 to 26,750 in 1910. In addition, the population composition changed significantly. In 1880 seven of every ten Pittsburghers were born in America. The remaining thirty percent came primarily from Ireland (11%), Germany (10%), and England (3%). By 1910, although immigrants still constituted less than one-third of the population, the distribution of the foreign-born population changed considerably. Nearly one-half of the city's 140,000 immigrants came from Italy, Poland, and the southeastern European Slavic countries. In addition, Pittsburgh's black population quintupled from 4,097 in 1880 to over 25,000 in 1910, to constitute four percent of the city's total population.

Industrial growth during this era paralleled the changing population structure. During the thirty years from 1880 to 1910, the number of iron and steel mills in Pittsburgh increased by three times, employing more than 50,000 workers by 1910. Similarly, the average number of workers employed in iron and steel production grew from 373 workers per enterprise in 1880 to 789 in 1910. By that year the city contained over 1,000 manufacturing enterprises.

employing more than fifty percent of the city's inhabitants in industrial work.

Late nineteenth-century transportation technology and political annexation greatly facilitated the population and industrial expansion of the era. In Pittsburgh the electric streetcar, the development of the inclined cable car, and the construction of bridges enabled greater housing and industrial development in formerly sparsely inhabited areas. (Pittsburgh's hills to the east, and the rivers to the north, south, and west made earlier expansion difficult.) These technological innovations directly influenced the development of segregated land use patterns. The area near the city center became a commercial, office, and shopping center while distinct industrial and residential sectors developed east of Pittsburgh and along both of her rivers. These areas figured prominently in the future of the city and city leaders promptly annexed eight separate pieces of territory between 1900 and 1910. The formerly independent city of Allegheny located along the Allegheny River, with a population exceeding 130,000, and West Liberty Borough, along the Monongahela River, were the most significant. Thus population growth and change, industrial and territorial expansion, and technological development all combined to create a most dynamic period in Pittsburgh's history.

This paper examines the residential and occupational patterns of blue-collar workers, primarily Irish and German born who resided in four industrial wards in Pittsburgh between 1880 and 1920. It attempts to test five major hypotheses. First, it examined the proposition that one's occupation was directly related to one's age and/or ethnic background. Second, that residential mobility, both intra-city and inter-city was a function of age rather than one's ethnic background. The so-called floating proletariat, therefore, were likely young men who settled down as they grew older rather than industrial transients who floated from city to city never achieving occupational success. Third, immigrants were more prone to residential transiency than native-born American workers. Fourth, ethnic communities, at least in nineteenth-century Pittsburgh, were constantly in a state of flux and change rather than closed ghettos. Immigrants of various nationalities moved in and out of communities and the ethnic orientation of the community itself frequently changed. Fifth, both immigrants and native-born workers in a dynamically expanding city could succeed in attaining better
occupations throughout their lives although at widely differing rates of success.

To test these hypotheses a sample of every tenth male between the ages of fifteen and fifty-nine in the 1880 census for Wards 14, 16, 24, and 27 has been traced until 1920 or until he left the city or died. Each of the wards was located in zones of heavy industry and contained a large concentration of immigrants or sons of immigrants.

Ward 14, located along the northern bank of the Monongahela River, contained a rolling mill, a tube works, the Pittsburgh Gas Works, and four iron and steel corporations including a division of Jones and Laughlin's American Iron Works. Immigrant blue-collar workers constituted over one half of the population. In addition, another one-fourth of the population had foreign-born parents. The Irish, twenty-four percent, and Germans, eleven percent, made up the bulk of that ward's immigrant population.

The Jones and Laughlin works dominated Ward 24, located across the Monongahela River from Ward 14, in Pittsburgh's burgeoning South Side. The company controlled all the land along the river bank and owned approximately one-third of the total acreage in the ward. Two large railroads—the Pittsburgh and Lake Erie, and the Pittsburgh, Virginia, and Charleston—serviced the area and controlled another large portion of land.
Ward 16, located near the Allegheny River, and Ward 27, contiguous to Ward 24 on the South Side, contained several similarities. Both wards were primarily blue-collar residential, although they actually contained few heavy industries. The residents of each ward worked at the iron and steel factories located along the Allegheny and Monongahela rivers. In addition, hilly terrain dominated both areas making long distance commuting difficult. Workers likely walked, or in Ward 27 rode the St. Clair incline, to their jobs in the steel mills.

Wards 16, 14, and 27 had similar native-born immigrant ratios, with approximately sixty percent foreign born. The mix of immigrants, however, differed somewhat. In both the 14th and 24th wards, more than one-fifth of the population came from Ireland and eleven percent from Germany. The Irish-German ratios in Wards 16 and 27 were just the opposite. In both wards between one-fourth and one-third of the population were German while less than fifteen percent came from Ireland. Other immigrants in each ward included small numbers of English, Welsh, and Scotch.

By 1910, while the industrial pattern of these wards remained the same, the ethnic composition changed significantly. One-third, or less, of all residents in each ward came from foreign nations. Moreover, the Irish in 1910 constituted less than five percent of the population in each ward. The German-born population similarly slipped to four percent or less in each ward. The city-wide proportion of these groups fell even more dramatically, with each group constituting less than five percent of the population in 1910. These changes reflect the increased population in each ward and the new immigration after 1890. They also suggest that while immigrants of northern European stock dominated several sections of the city they were not confined to any one location within the city.

Data from each ward also reveals a marked similarity in the age structure of its working class population. In 1880 more than thirty-five percent of the workers sampled in each subdivision recorded ages between 15 and 29 and another one-third between 30 and 39. The relatively young age of the workers reflects the nature of available work within each of the sample wards. Physically demanding factory work required young workers who could stand the rigors of the long day. In addition, many young single men, between

7. Ward 27 in Pittsburgh had the greatest concentration of unskilled workers listed in that category. The blue-collar, white-collar distribution showed a similarly unequal distribution.
thirty and forty percent of the population, mostly immigrants, resided within each ward. Nearly one-fourth of the workers in the 14th and 24th Irish wards lived in boarding houses.

The vertical occupational distribution of workers in the four wards in 1880 was quite striking. An average of forty-eight percent of the workers in wards 14, 16, and 24 held unskilled jobs. Another forty percent held semi-skilled occupations. Conversely, only twelve percent held either low white- or high white-collar occupations. Ward 27 had an even greater concentration of blue-collar workers with sixty-three percent listed as unskilled, fifteen percent semi-skilled and seventeen percent skilled. Only five percent wore white collars to work. One, of course, might expect these heavy concentrations of blue-collar workers given the industrial nature of the four wards. The ethnic and age distribution of workers within these five occupational groups, conversely, proved somewhat surprising.

Native-born workers, as one might expect, held the majority of skilled and white-collar occupations. Recent quantitative studies, however, demonstrated that German workers in other American industrial cities generally had a clear advantage over their Irish-born counterparts in the urban occupational structure. Such was not the case in Pittsburgh. Taking all four wards together, German and Irish-born workers constituted a nearly identical proportion of the sample universe, twenty and eighteen percent. The total of all Irish and German immigrants constituted eleven and ten percent of the entire city’s population. Both groups, while at a disadvantage when compared with the native-born population, held nearly identical proportions of each skill classification. Fifty-seven percent of each ethnic group held unskilled jobs; one in ten did semi-skilled work; twenty-eight percent of the Germans and twenty-five percent of the Irish performed skilled work. Only eight percent of the Irish and five percent of the Germans had white-collar occupations. Thus, it appears that neither group held any advantage over the other in the race for skilled or white-collar work. One should note, however, that the sample universe includes only workers from four industrial wards. If the most successful workers generally resided in the city’s more affluent sections, the net cast here likely captured the least successful of each immigrant group. The reader is reminded that the data pertains only to the workers in each of the four sample wards and may not reflect city-wide patterns.
One might expect, however, given the relatively young age of workers in each ward that those in their youth would hold the lower level occupations while older workers held the major share of the skilled and white-collar work. An analysis of the relationship between one's age and the occupations held, however, tends to refute this expectation.

In 1880 young workers, under age twenty-nine (forty-two percent of the total population), performed the bulk of all unskilled and semi-skilled work. They also held nearly one-third of all skilled occupations and forty-five percent of the low white-collar positions. Men between the ages of thirty and thirty-nine, one-third of the total work force, held twenty-nine percent of the unskilled jobs, thirty-five percent of the semi-skilled, and forty-four percent of the skilled occupations. They also constituted approximately one-third of the white-collar labor force. Workers in their forties constituted 18.5 percent of the population and held a nearly identical proportion, one-fifth, of the jobs in each skill group. Workers in their fifties, seven percent of the sample universe, held a similar number of blue-collar jobs. They did, however, hold a disproportionate share, seventeen percent, of the high white-collar occupations. Thus, neither age nor one's ethnicity, with the exception of the native-born, foreign-born gap, seemed to play an important part in determining one's occupational skill level in nineteenth-century Pittsburgh.

Thus far, we have examined the demographic and occupational structure of four ethnic wards at a single point in time, 1880. The remainder of this paper traces the changes in life patterns of these residents during one of the city's most progressive periods.

An analysis of life patterns requires that one study individuals at several points in time. Unfortunately, late nineteenth-century Americans moved frequently, compounding the researcher's task. Many simply disappeared from the city leaving no clue as to their ultimate destination. Nearly half of the workers in Boston, Poughkeepsie, Atlanta, and Omaha failed to remain in these cities for a full decade. Persistence rates of workers in four sample wards in Pittsburgh follows a similar pattern. Fifty-seven percent of all the residents who lived in the 14th, 16th, 24th, and 27th wards had

left the city, died or could not be traced by 1890. In addition, only twenty-five percent continued to live in the same ward. Residents who remained in the city longer than a decade, however, apparently found some favorable elements to induce greater stability. Of the 1880 residents who persisted through 1890, fifty-seven percent remained until 1900 and nearly half of that group remained until 1910.

This increased stability suggests that as workers’ stations in life improved they tended to become more sedentary. It may also suggest that the high rates of geographic mobility found in many nineteenth century cities was simply due to the relatively young population structure. It was expected by this researcher that one would find a curvilinear relationship between age and persistence. The young and the old were expected to have low rates of persistence, with the
low rates of the aged attributable to death rather than outward migration. Those in their thirties and forties, one might expect, would be much more stable. The evidence in four Pittsburgh wards, however, tends to refute this hypothesis. Table 1 arranges all workers in the sample wards according to their ages at the time they left the city or died.

**TABLE 1**

**INTER-CITY RESIDENTIAL MOVERS BY AGE**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age Group</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>15-29</td>
<td>51.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30-39</td>
<td>50.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40-49</td>
<td>48.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50 &amp; over</td>
<td>54.3%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**SOURCE:** All tables in this paper derived from: *Tenth census of the United States: 1880. Manuscript schedule of inhabitants of Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania; Pittsburgh City Directories, 1880, 1890, 1900, 1910, 1920.*

**NOTE:** As the above table illustrates, while much of the movement in the 50 and over group may be the result of death, workers in the other three age groups left the city at nearly identical rates. This somewhat perplexing finding suggests that factors other than age operated in Pittsburgh to produce the high rates of geographic mobility. Two other possibilities seem likely: both one's level of skill and one's ethnic background may influence the degree of residential stability. Table 2 examines the relationship between skill level and persistence in the community.
TABLE 2
RATE OF PERSISTENCE BY ORIGINAL SKILL

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Skill Level</th>
<th>1890</th>
<th>1900</th>
<th>1910</th>
<th>1920</th>
<th>Total N</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Unskilled</td>
<td>40.6</td>
<td>48.0</td>
<td>38.3</td>
<td>21.7</td>
<td>295</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Semi-Skilled</td>
<td>10.6</td>
<td>60.4</td>
<td>46.2</td>
<td>25.0</td>
<td>85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Skilled</td>
<td>38.0</td>
<td>53.1</td>
<td>52.9</td>
<td>16.6</td>
<td>158</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low White Collar</td>
<td>56.4</td>
<td>61.3</td>
<td>47.4</td>
<td>44.4</td>
<td>55</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

SOURCE: Sample Data

NOTE: This table displays the rates of persistence of that proportion of the sample recorded at the beginning of a decade remaining at the end of the decade. For example, 40.6 percent of the 295 unskilled workers sampled in 1880 remained in the city in 1890; 48 percent of that group continued to live in Pittsburgh in 1900, etc.

The data displayed in this table reveals a mild positive relationship between level of skill and persistence in the community. Generally, semi-skilled workers were more stable than the unskilled, and white-collar workers tended to remain longer than blue-collar workers. The exception presented by skilled workers may result from their special skills in an industrial world. Most of the skilled in the four sample wards in Pittsburgh had training in steel production and iron working. Technological developments in the steel industry—introduced first in the Pittsburgh region—often decreased the demand for skilled laborers. Earlier mills, as David Brody points out, "required highly skilled men to catch and pass hot steel through the rolls. At every point rollers, roughers, and heaters had manually handled the metal. They were men of long experience and at a premium in America. Each new device that mechanized a difficult procedure undermined their favored position." As mill workers became primarily semi-skilled operatives, Pittsburgh's skilled workers may have left the city in search of factories still in need of their talents. The demand for their skills in other cities and in nearby steel communities such as Duquesne and Aliquippa may have acted.

as a magnet to pull them away from Pittsburgh. Thus, in nineteenth-century Pittsburgh, one's level of skill tended to have a greater influence on residential stability than did one's age.

The available data suggest an even stronger relationship between ethnicity and persistence in the community. American-born workers, although many were sons of immigrants, tended to remain in Pittsburgh longer than their foreign-born counterparts. One-half of the native-born workers from the 1880 sample continued to reside in the city ten years later. Moreover, seventy percent of those remaining in 1890 still lived in Pittsburgh by 1900. Sixteen of the original 262 native-born workers continued to reside there in 1920. Only one of the 354 foreign-born workers could be traced in 1920.

Only the Irish of the three major immigrant groups living in the sample wards approached the persistence rates achieved by the native Americans. The reasons for this similarity are not clear, particularly when one recalls that the Germans and Irish held a nearly identical proportion of the jobs at each skill level. Pending further investigation, one must simply conclude that the Irish in Pittsburgh had a greater propensity to settle than did the German-born workers.

A comparison of the persistence rates of American-born workers and all foreign-born workers combined demonstrates the striking difference in persistence between these two groups. Exactly half of the 1880 native-born workers still lived in Pittsburgh in 1890, while only forty percent of all foreign-born workers sampled remained. Ten years later seventy percent of the remaining native-born workers still lived in Pittsburgh; one-half of the foreign-born group continued to do so.

Of the three variables thus far examined, age, occupational skill level, and ethnicity, one's birthplace appears to have the greatest influence on inter-city geographic mobility. In Pittsburgh, native-born workers stayed more often and longer than foreign-born workers. Certain ethnic groups, the Irish in particular, also tended to be more stable than others.

Intra-city residential mobility proved much more elusive to analyze than inter-city mobility. Less than ten percent of the population sampled remained at the same address for more than a decade. One-half of all those remaining within the city continued to reside in their original ward each decade. The remainder, however, moved in all directions throughout the city with no discernible pattern of movement. No more than five of the movers from any one of the sample wards journeyed to any other single ward. Outside forces—
one’s skill or age—may have influenced the decision to move. The destination of the movers, however, was likely decided by individual choice. Some may have moved to seek a better occupation or a more pleasant living environment; others perhaps to purchase a house or rent a less expensive one. None of the quantifiable sources presently available, however, provide any insight into the motivation of workers moving within the city.

Occupational mobility both by initial skill level and by ethnicity constitutes the final portion of this analysis. Between 1880 and 1910 the number of occupations in the city nearly quadrupled. Thus, one might expect workers who remained in the city for any length of time to move up the occupational hierarchy as new and better occupations became available. The remainder of this paper examines the career patterns of three groups of workers who resided in the Pittsburgh sample wards in 1880.

Less than forty-five percent of the 295 unskilled workers sampled in the four wards in 1880 continued to reside in the city one decade later. Of that number, nearly two-thirds continued to labor in the low-skill, low-pay strata. Fifteen men, 12.5 percent, secured semi-skilled occupations and 20 workers managed to attain skilled jobs. Only 8 men, 6.6 percent, moved up to white-collar position. Unskilled workers from the 1880 sample who remained in Pittsburgh for any length of time, however, frequently succeeded in securing higher level occupations. By 1900 one-half of the persisting workers held semi-skilled or better jobs and an impressive one-third held positions at the skilled or higher levels. One decade later only 25 of the original 295 unskilled workers remained in the city. Fifteen of those men moved up the occupational ladder, with twelve securing jobs at the skilled or white-collar levels. For unskilled workers who remained in the city any length of time, occupational advancement was a distinct possibility.

The small number of semi-skilled workers from the sample data experienced a climb similar to that of their less skilled counterparts. By 1890, only half of the original eighty-five semi-skilled workers still lived in Pittsburgh. Nearly forty percent of the persisters, however, moved up the occupational ladder. Approximately two-thirds of these workers continued to live in the city at the turn of the century. This increase in persistence again illustrates the positive relationship between residential stability and occupational position. Upwardly mobile workers simply had less reason to move than the unsuccessful.
Skilled workers in Pittsburgh, conversely, experienced less upward mobility and greater residential mobility than other blue-collar workers and they frequently moved both up and down the occupational ladder. By 1890 only five percent of the persisting skilled workers from the 1890 sample moved to a low white-collar position. In addition, this may not be a move upward at all since some low white-collar occupations held less status than did a skilled craftsman. Moreover, nearly twenty percent slipped to lower skilled positions. This pattern continued through the next decade with nearly three-fourths of all skilled workers maintaining that position. By 1910, a few workers did manage to attain white-collar positions but the small number of workers remaining renders this data statistically insignificant. The difficulty experienced by skilled workers in attaining white-collar positions, however, should not be attributed to a lack of opportunity. Most skilled workers possessed a talent acquired after years of training. One could hardly expect them to abandon their "profession" and forsake years of work in search of white-collar work. It may be that we impute too much status to low white-collar work. Nineteenth century skilled workers most likely viewed themselves as equal, if not superior to the clerk or the sales agent.

One final dimension of mobility must now be examined. We need to know whether native sons enjoyed greater opportunities than foreign-born workers. Table 3 compares the career upward mobility of American-born workers with various immigrant groups.

**TABLE 3**

**UPWARD OCCUPATIONAL MOBILITY BY ETHNICITY**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>All</th>
<th>Other</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>U.S Born</td>
<td>Immigrants</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No Mobility</td>
<td>56.9</td>
<td>59.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Upward Mobility</td>
<td>43.1</td>
<td>40.2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

SOURCE: Sample Data

American-born workers from the 1880 sample group experienced slightly greater upward mobility than all immigrants combined. The Irish, however, succeeded in achieving greater mobility than any other single ethnic group including those born in

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10. The high rate of outward migration among each ethnic group unfortunately prevented a statistically significant decade by decade analysis of each group. Table 3, therefore, examines the total career patterns of each ethnic group.
America. As Table 3 indicates, nearly half of the Irish who remained in Pittsburgh moved up during the course of their lives. Similarly, forty-three percent of the American-born workers and thirty-four percent of the Germans succeeded in acquiring better jobs throughout their lives in Pittsburgh. Clearly, Irish and German immigrant workers in Pittsburgh suffered no disadvantages in the mobility race when compared with native-born workers from the same era. Thus, the preceding analysis of the career patterns of workers in four Pittsburgh wards suggests a number of conclusions.

First, with the exception of the native-born, foreign-born gap in original occupation, neither age nor ethnic background determined the type of occupation that one might hold. A nearly equal distribution of workers of all ages held jobs in each of the five skill positions. Moreover, both the Irish and German-born workers held jobs in nearly equal proportions in all of the occupational groups.
Second, rates of persistence for all groups of workers demonstrate that large numbers of men left Pittsburgh during each decade of the study. In addition, one's age apparently had little influence on persistence or transiency. Workers in every age group left the city with similar frequency. The data, however, do suggest a relationship between the occupation one held, place of birth, and residential persistence.

Third, while rates of persistence among various immigrant groups differed, the persistence of native-born workers exceeded that of every immigrant group. Moreover, the gap between persistence of native and foreign-born workers increased during each succeeding decade. Native-born workers held the best jobs among all workers in the sample, thus increasing their likelihood of remaining within the community for an extended period of time.

Fourth, the ethnic composition of all four sample wards changed dramatically during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. By 1920, Slavic, Italian, and Polish immigrants replaced those from Ireland and Germany as the dominant groups in the city. Moreover, the ethnic make-up of each ward also changed, suggesting a fluid rather than static residential patterns. Intra-city residential mobility confirms this conclusion. Workers moved, seemingly at will, around the city with no clearly discernible patterns.

Finally, persistent blue-collar workers at the lowest two occupational levels frequently succeeded in attaining higher level occupations. Within two decades fully one-half of all persistent unskilled and semi-skilled workers moved up the occupational ladder. Skilled workers, conversely, tended to maintain their position throughout their careers.

Recently, Stephan Thernstrom attempted to illustrate that late nineteenth-century American cities whether large or small, Eastern, Southern, or Western, new or old, shared certain similar patterns of geographic and occupational mobility. The data from four industrial wards in late nineteenth-century Pittsburgh supports one portion of this hypothesis while casting doubt upon the other.

Workers in Pittsburgh left the community as frequently as their counterparts in other American cities. Persistence rates for workers in Pittsburgh between 1880 and 1890 nearly matched those of workers in Omaha, Nebraska, (fourty-three and forty percent) during the same decade. Residents in four other American cities

11. Thernstrom, The Other Bostonians, pp. 220.
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demonstrated somewhat greater stability. Between fifty and sixty-five percent of the 1880 residents of San Francisco, Los Angeles, Waltham, and Boston continued to reside in their respective cities in 1890. The Pittsburgh data, however, includes only workers from four industrial wards throughout the city. White-collar workers probably recorded higher rates of persistence than did blue-collar laborers. They held better jobs, frequently owned property, and had more reason to remain in the city than their less skilled counterparts. Thus, persistence rates of all workers in Pittsburgh most likely conform to the general migration patterns found in other late nineteenth-century cities.

The success experiences of blue-collar workers in the Pittsburgh sample, however, differ significantly from those noted in other American cities. In Pittsburgh sixty percent of the unskilled workers sampled in 1880 improved their positions within thirty years; one in five moved to skilled or white-collar positions. Comparable data is available for only four later nineteenth-century cities. The Pittsburgh mobility rates deviate significantly from three of the four. Nearly seventy percent of the workers who began their careers in low manual positions in Poughkeepsie, New York, in 1850 remained in that classification thirty years later. Only fifteen percent managed to attain white-collar occupations. Unskilled laborers beginning work in 1850 in Newburyport, Massachusetts, recorded slightly greater rates of mobility. By 1880, only a few men in the original sample remained in the city and fifty-seven percent of those continued to labor at unskilled occupations. Workers in Boston were similarly unsuccessful in acquiring better occupations. An 1880 sample of low manual workers revealed that fifty-nine percent failed to achieve any mobility at all during their careers. Unskilled workers in Warren, Pennsylvania, a rapidly growing industrial city, however, did experience success rates equal to their downstate counterparts in the city of Pittsburgh. Six of every ten unskilled workers beginning work in Warren in 1880 achieved some mobility.

14. Thernstrom, The Other Bostonians, pp. 222. The comparative data cited here for both Poughkeepsie and Boston use a low-manual rather than unskilled classification. Some of the Pittsburgh mobility is, of course, a movement from unskilled to semi-skilled. The differing mobility rates, therefore, may not be as great as they first appear.
15. Thernstrom, Poverty and Progress, pp. 96.
during their working careers; one-fourth secured white-collar positions.\textsuperscript{16}

Men joining the work force in 1880 in Pittsburgh, the second largest city in Pennsylvania, and Warren containing less than 15,000 people, most likely benefited from rapidly expanding economies. In both cities new skills and talents, constantly in demand during the latter quarter of the century, provided avenues of upward mobility for many. These findings suggest that there may have been important inter-urban variations in the mobility patterns of late nineteenth-century blue-collar workers. Men in Boston, Newburyport, and Poughkeepsie experienced very limited mobility. Workers in two Pennsylvania cities, one large and one small, enjoyed much greater success. The mobility of workers in all five cities, however, fell mainly within the blue-collar strata. Few individuals managed to bridge the gulf between manual and non-manual worker.

Patterns of mobility in rapidly growing middle-Atlantic and mid-western industrial cities, however, may have exceeded the now familiar norms noted by Thernstrom and others in the nineteenth-century American city. Variations due to local economic conditions and industrial patterns likely exerted a strong influence on the success of blue-collar workers within each city. Future mobility studies, if they are to add anything at all to our understanding of the experiences of nineteenth century workers, must seriously examine the relationship between occupational success and urban economic growth.


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\textbf{DO YOU KNOW WHERE YOUR CHILDREN ARE?}

\textit{Belleverton.} Could parents and Town Council be induced to prohibit boys from running the streets at night, a blessing would be conferred upon the boys in particular and upon the community in general.

\textit{Uniontown, Genius of Liberty, 2 April 1874.}

\textsc{Contributed by Schuyler C. Marshall, California State College.}
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