

Understanding 50 Years of Contributions from the NLS and Envisioning Its Future

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Uniqueness and Richness of the NLS Data Sets

- Follow cohorts of individuals over long span of time
- Collect complete history of respondents' labor market experiences
- Collect information on many aspects of respondents' lives: schooling, training, skills, income, assets, union formation, fertility
- Contains measure of cognitive and non-cognitive skills
- High school transcripts, secondary school surveys, college transcripts

History of the NLS Program

Original Cohorts

- Began in 1966
- Sponsored by Office of Manpower, Automation, and Training (now ETA)
- CHRR headed the project
- Data collected by Census Bureau

NLSY79

- Began in 1979
- Sponsored initially by Office of Manpower, Automation, and Training
- Collaboration with CHRR and NORC

NLSY97

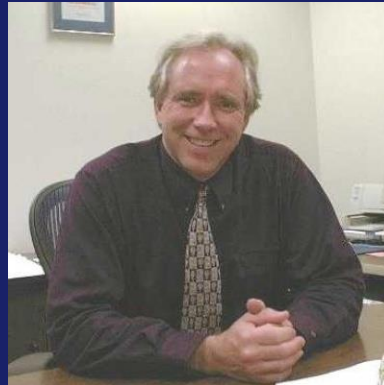
- Began in 1997
- Sponsored by BLS
- Collaboration with CHRR and NORC

BLS Role in NLS Program

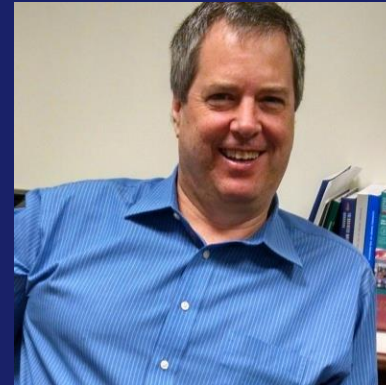
- NLS Program moved from ETA to BLS under Commissioner Janet Norwood in 1986
- Directors of the NLS at BLS



Mike Pergamit



Mike Horrigan



Chuck Pierret



Jeff Groen

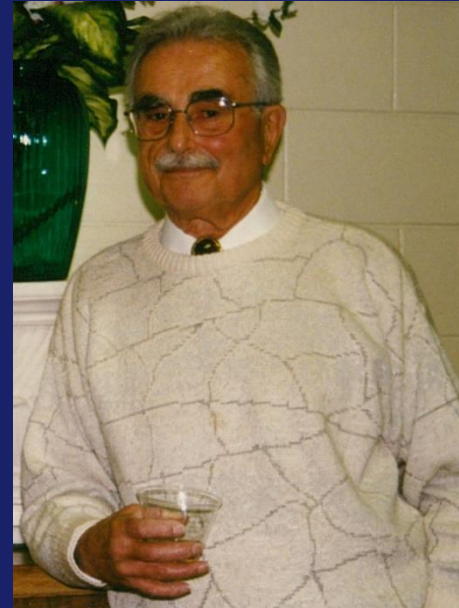
NLS Original Cohorts

- NLS program began in 1966 under sponsorship of the Office of Manpower, Automation, and Training (now ETA)
- Data were collected by Census
- Four Cohorts: Older Men, Mature Women, Young Men, Young Women.
- Each composed of about 5,000 individuals
- Each of these cohorts faced important labor market decisions: retirement, returning to the labor force, transitioning from school to work

Founded CHRR to oversee Original Cohorts



Clif Kelley

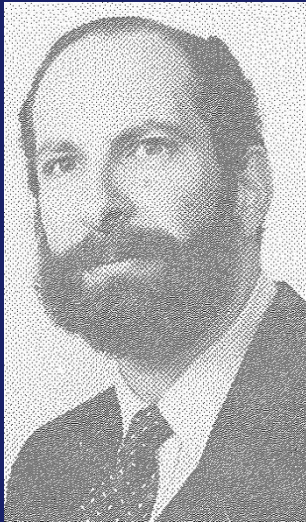


Herb Parnes

NLSY79

- Decision to replicate Young Men and Young Women cohorts to evaluate employment and training programs for youth
- NLSY79 sample: born 1957-1964, oversamples of black and Hispanic youth, and military
- First interviewed in 1979 (ages 14 to 22) and interviewed for the 26th time in 2014-15 (ages 50 to 58)

Principal Investigators of the NLSY79



Michael
Borus



Kenneth
Wolpin



Randall
Olsen



Audrey
Light

Children of the NLSY79

- Began in 1986, collect information on children born to women in the NLSY79
- Cognitive and non-cognitive assessments conducted biennially at ages 3 to 15
- Funded by NICHD
- Permits intergenerational analysis and examination of long-term impacts of early resources and events
- Over 11,500 children born from 1970 to 2011
- About 28% are now parents themselves

Start of the Children/Young Adults of the NLSY79



Wendy
Baldwin



Bob Michael



Frank Mott

Principal Investigators: Children and Young Adults of NLSY79



Frank Mott



Elizabeth Cooksey

NLSY97

- Newest NLS cohort started to allow the study of the transition from school to work and into adulthood for a new generation.
- NLSY97 Sample: born 1980-1984, oversamples of black and Hispanic youth
- First interviewed in 1997 (ages 12 to 17) and will be interviewed for 17th time in 2015-16 (ages 30 to 36)

Principal Investigators of the NLSY97



Robert T.
Michael



Jim
Walker



Dan Black



Lowell
Taylor

Partners

- Numerous agencies and foundations have supported the NLS programs through the years.
 - ▶ Eunice Kennedy Shriver National Institute of Child Health and Human Development
 - ▶ Bureau of Justice Statistics
 - ▶ Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
 - ▶ Department of Defense
 - ▶ Employment and Training Administration
 - ▶ Ewing Marion Kauffman Foundation
 - ▶ Foundation for Child Development
 - ▶ John Templeton Foundation
 - ▶ National Center for Research in Vocational Education

Partners

- ▶ National Center on Minority Health and Health Disparities
- ▶ National Institute of Education
- ▶ National Institute on Aging
- ▶ National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism
- ▶ National Institute on Drug Abuse
- ▶ National School-to-Work Office
- ▶ National Science Foundation
- ▶ Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention
- ▶ Office of Manpower Policy, Evaluation, and Research
- ▶ Pension and Welfare Benefits Administration
- ▶ Social Security Administration
- ▶ Veterans' Employment and Training Service
- ▶ Women's Bureau

NLS Data Are Widely Used

- Research predominantly in fields of economics, sociology, education, child development, psychology, and health
 - ▶ Over 3,700 journal articles
 - ▶ Over 1,200 dissertations and master's theses

Value of the NLS data

- Janet Currie, Professor of Economics, Princeton University

“Studies using the NLS cover a staggeringly broad array of topics. Looking through them, I was startled to realize how much of what we know about the labor market is only knowable because of the NLS.”

Value of the NLS data

- Derek Neal, Professor of Economics, University of Chicago

“[From the NLS] I learned that we cannot understand why adults have such diverse employment and earnings trajectories without going back to their youth to understand the skill and background differences that shaped how they transitioned into adulthood.”

Future of the NLS Program

- Support for the NLS program
 - ▶ Uncertain budgets the norm
 - ▶ Broad and deep support for the value and contributions of the NLS

Future of the NLS Program

- A vision for the future
 - ▶ Introduction of new cohorts on an ongoing basis (every 5, 10 years) to cover the age spectrum
 - ▶ Identify cohorts at early ages to minimize initial conditions bias and develop baseline measures of ability and skill

Future of the NLS Program

- A vision for the future
 - ▶ Create a vibrant research agenda based on merging relevant data sets with the NLS cohort files
 - ▶ Leverage the potential of administrative data to provide objective measures to complement self-reported activity by respondents

Future of the NLS Program

- A vision for the future
 - Earnings of self and spouse/partners
 - Wage records
 - Medical histories
 - Medicare records
 - National death index
 - Criminal activity
 - FBI Rap sheets
 - Loan debt
 - Student loans
 - Home loans
 - Credit scores

Future of the NLS Program

- A vision for the future
 - ▶ For each cohort, can we create intergenerational longitudinal profiles
 - Initial parent interview in the NLSY97
 - Children and grandchildren of the NLSY79 (and perhaps the NLSY97)

Future of the NLS Program

- A vision for the future
 - ▶ Can we leverage the interests of a wide variety of government agencies to create multi-purpose and multi-funded “shared” longitudinal cohorts?
 - ▶ ... as distinct from reimbursable agreements to purchase module minutes in an interview

Future of the NLS Program

- A vision for the future
 - ▶ Example: Shared cohorts with DOJ/BJJS, DOL, DOE, DOD, ETA, and NIA among others providing domain expertise for planning modules throughout the life of each cohort
 - ▶ Provide a funding platform for introduction of new cohorts on a periodic basis to represent the age spectrum
 - ▶ Develop a priori plans for interviewing the children of cohorts

Future of the NLS Program

- A vision for the future
 - ▶ Begin a youth cohort ages 12-16
 - Oversample based on youth crime
 - ▶ Add a military supplemental sample ages 17-22
 - ▶ Introduce immigrant samples every 5 years
 - ▶ through retirement

Contact Information

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