Long-run effects of post-secondary education in the Wisconsin Longitudinal Study

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What is the Wisconsin Longitudinal Study?

- A one-third random sample of high school graduates in the "Class of 1957"
- 10,317 original members of the sample
- Born in and around 1939, ~64 during 2003
- 8500 graduates interviewed in 1992-93
- About 5,500 siblings, older and younger than graduates
- Data on education, careers, family, health
What are future plans for the Wisconsin Longitudinal Study?

- New surveys of graduates, siblings, spouses, and widows
- Focus on family, health, and retirement
- Major funding from the National Institute on Aging
- 50+ investigators in sociology, demography, epidemiology, economics, social and cognitive psychology, industrial engineering, neuroscience, social work, psychiatry, law, nursing, and medicine
Education and adult outcomes

Education: high school, some college, college or more

Outcomes
- Jobs and income
- Assets (home ownership, net worth)
- Health and health behavior
- Social participation (organizations, charity)

Why do they matter?
- Private goods
- Public goods
Figure 1. Education by gender in the WLS
High-status occupations

Which are the high status occupations?
- Professional and technical workers
- Managers and officials
- Non-retail sales workers

What is distinctive about these occupation groups?
- High educational and skill demands
- High complexity of work
- High pay
Figure 3. Men in high status occupations by post-secondary education: Wisconsin high school class of 1957
Background variables

- Socioeconomic background (parent's education, parent's occupational standing, family income, farm origin, size of place)
- Family structure (intact family, number of siblings)
- Academic preparation (test scores, grades, curriculum)
- Social psychological variables (parents' and teachers' encouragement, peer influence, educational and occupational aspirations)
Figure 4. Women in high status occupations by post-secondary education: Wisconsin high school class of 1957
Table 1. Median family income in 2001 dollars by post-secondary schooling: WLS graduates

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1974 High school</th>
<th>Some college</th>
<th>College degree</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Men</td>
<td>$45,845</td>
<td>$50,241</td>
<td>$60,604</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Women</td>
<td>$43,961</td>
<td>$49,613</td>
<td>$52,753</td>
</tr>
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<td>$59,351</td>
<td>$80,989</td>
<td>$100,154</td>
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<td>$50,695</td>
<td>$64,080</td>
<td>$77,898</td>
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1974 High school | Some college | College degree | 1992 High school | Some college | College degree |
<table>
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<td>$50,695</td>
<td>$77,898</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Figure 5. Median income (2001 dollars) of persons and families by year: United States
Figure 6. Percentage of families with more than 150% of national median family income by post-secondary education: Wisconsin high school class of 1957
### Table 2. Median personal income in 2001 dollars by post-secondary schooling: WLS graduates

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<thead>
<tr>
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Figure 7. Percentage of men with more than 150% of national median personal income by post-secondary education: Wisconsin high school class of 1957.
Figure 8. Percentage of women with more than 150% of national median personal income by post-secondary education: Wisconsin high school class of 1957
Figure 9. Percentage of graduates owning homes worth more in 1992 than the WLS median ($111,000 in 2001 dollars) by post-secondary education: Wisconsin high school class of 1957
Figure 10. Percentage of graduates with more net assets in 1992 than the WLS median ($173,000 in 2001 dollars) by post-secondary education: Wisconsin high school class of 1957.
Figure 11. Percentage of graduates with "excellent" self-reported health in 1992 by post-secondary education: Wisconsin high school class of 1957
Figure 12. Percentage of graduates with serious, self-reported depression in 1992 by post-secondary education: Wisconsin high school class of 1957
Figure 13. Percentage of graduates who smoke cigarettes in 1992 by post-secondary education: Wisconsin high school class of 1957
Figure 14. Percentage of graduates who participated in more than one type of voluntary organization in 1992 by post-secondary education: Wisconsin high school class of 1957
Figure 15. Percentage of graduates who gave more than $500 to charities in 1992 by post-secondary education: Wisconsin high school class of 1957
Remember the "Happy Days"!

Telling the Story of Wisconsin's Class of 1957