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8 **The Short- and Long-Term Effects of Life Events on Residential Mobility**
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Abstract

In this paper we examine how life events impact inter-neighborhood residential mobility among a cohort of young adults from the United States. We combine choice-based models of mobility with life-course principles to argue that life events associated with the transition to adulthood should be associated with residential mobility in the short-term, but residential stability in the long-term. Unanticipated and disruptive events, on the other hand, are expected to place individuals on a long-term trajectory of residential instability. Longitudinal survey data covering nearly 30 years allows us to capture short-term effects, average effects, and trends across time. We find particularly strong short-term effects on mobility for marriage and homeownership, both of which subsequently lead to long-term stability. We also find that divorce and incarceration (an emerging turning point in the life-course) predict instability in both the short- and long-term. Additional analyses suggest that some events – like homeownership – are immediately stabilizing, while others – like marriage – lead to stability across time. We conclude by discussing the contributions of the findings to our understanding of residential mobility and the transition to adulthood in the contemporary United States.

Keywords: residential mobility, life-course, transition to adulthood

The Short- and Long-Term Effects of Life Events on Residential Mobility

Introduction

Each year approximately 15% of Americans make a residential move (Lee and Hall 2009). Mobility is not a random occurrence, but rather often the result of individual and household characteristics that change the definition of housing needs. For many individuals, then, the decision to move is entirely voluntary, and traditional explanations cast mobility decisions in terms of satisfaction with the current dwelling relative to other housing wants and needs (Landale and Guest 1985; Rossi 1980; Speare, Goldstein, and Frey 1975). But not all mobility is voluntary, and many perfectly satisfied individuals are forced or compelled to move each year (Clark and Withers 2008). Disadvantaged and marginalized portions of the population are especially vulnerable to push factors that create unanticipated mobility (Lee 1978). Thus, while many Americans are “ever more rooted,” a portion of the population is more appropriately characterized as residentially unstable (Fischer 2002).

The current study follows a cohort of young-adults across nearly 30 years to investigate whether and how certain life events promote residential stability and instability across the life-course. Behind many moves are important life events and turning points, including marriage, childbearing, and homeownership. Such events are generally considered part of the transition to adulthood in American society (Furstenberg et al. 2004; Hogan and Astone 1986; Settersten and Hagestad 2006; Shanahan 2000). But these are not the sole determinants of mobility, as unanticipated events, such as divorce, are also correlated with a change of address (see Clark and Onaka 1983; Mulder and Wagner 2010). We define mobility – both conceptually and empirically – as a change of address that takes an individual across a census tract boundary while remaining in the same county (Clark 1986; Fischer 2002; Lee and Hall 2009; Rossi 1955). This is consistent with the U.S. Census Bureau’s definition of residential mobility as intra-county movement, or what others have termed inter-neighborhood mobility (Crowder, South, and Chavez 2006; South, Crowder, and Pais 2008). Conventionally, internal migration has been conceptualized as distinct from local residential movement in that inter-county or long-distance moves are often triggered by events such as job relocations or attending college (Long 1988; Mulder and Hooimeijer 1999; Stoll 2013). Indeed in

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4 recent years, and spurred on in part by the Great Recession, the rate of long-range migrations has been on
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6 the decline while the rate of local moves has been on the rise. Within-county moves hovered around 60%
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8 of all residential moves between 1980 and 2000, but the rate of local moves rose precipitously to a share
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10 of almost 75% by 2010 (Stoll 2013).
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13 This article joins a growing body of research that places residential mobility within the life-course
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15 perspective. In doing so, we make three primary contributions. First, we consider the separate short- and
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17 long-term effects of a variety of life events on residential mobility. This adds nuance to our understanding
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19 of how the timing and duration of life events impact the decision to stay or move locally. Second, our
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21 focus on events that create both anticipated and unanticipated mobility provides a better understanding of
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23 how some events set a long-term course of residential instability. That is, some moves perpetuate the
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25 housing disequilibrium created by unanticipated events (Coulter and van Ham 2013). Finally, our use of
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27 longitudinal data from the United States allow us to follow individual trajectories of residential mobility
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29 across nearly 30 years of observation. We can therefore capture the shifting propensities to move by
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31 individuals during and following the transition into adulthood. We start by first outlining the choice-based
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33 (or life-cycle) residential decision-making model that has informed a wealth of mobility research.
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35 Following the lead of others (e.g., Clark and Withers 2008; Coulter and van Ham 2013; Feijten 2005;
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37 Geist and McManus 2008; Kulu and Milewski 2008), we adopt principles of the life-course perspective to
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39 more explicitly detail how different events might have divergent short- and long-term associations with
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41 residential mobility. After overviewing the data and analytic strategy, we present a series of models
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43 predicting the probability of moving based on various transitions and trajectories.
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49 *Life Events and Residential Mobility*

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51 Residential mobility has traditionally been explained as a rational choice process driven by
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53 residential stress or satisfaction (Rossi 1980; Speare et al. 1975). This explanation can be traced back to
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55 Rossi (1980), who argued that mobility is the response to needs generated when life-cycle changes create
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57 shifts in family composition. The residential mobility process begins when something triggers an increase
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59 in housing dissatisfaction or (less commonly) when individuals are forced to leave their current residence.
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4 If residential dissatisfaction, or disequilibrium, crosses an individual's threshold, a search for alternatives
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6 is likely to follow (Speare et al. 1975). Once an individual has expressed a desire to move, he or she
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8 evaluates both the feasibility and urgency of undertaking a move; those who perceive a potential move as
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10 both feasible and urgent are more likely to convert their mobility intentions into actions (Coulter 2013).
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12 Most moves tend to be short-distance – often beginning and ending in the same neighborhood or no more
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14 than a few miles away – because people are more aware of housing options in close proximity (Lee and
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16 Hall 2009), and because moving long distance is significantly more costly than staying local (Roseman
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18 1971). If, during the search process, a more suitable housing situation emerges, then the likelihood of a
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20 move rises. Minus better alternatives, individuals may attempt to relieve their dissatisfaction in alternative
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22 ways. For example, homeowners desiring a larger house may consider building an extension to the
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24 current household. Alternatively, people can revise their threshold of housing dissatisfaction such that
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26 their housing expectations become more closely aligned with their current dwelling (Speare 1974).
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31 Chief among the correlates of mobility are individual and household characteristics tied to
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33 important life events that change the definition of housing needs and create dissatisfaction with the current
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35 dwelling (Landale and Guest 1985; Lee and Hall 2009; Rossi 1980; Speare et al. 1975). Rossi (1980), for
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37 instance, argued that the decision to move is primarily a function of changes in family composition as an
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39 individual goes through various life-cycle stages. It is no surprise, then, that some of the strongest
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41 predictors of mobility include getting married, buying a home, having a child, completing an education,
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43 and transitioning into full-time employment (Clark 1986; Feijten and Mulder 2002; Kulu 2008; Michielin
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45 and Mulder 2008; Mulder and Hooimeijer 1999; Rossi 1980; South and Deane 1993; Speare 1974). These
46
47 transitions alter an individual's needs and preferences for housing, which in turn raise levels of residential
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49 dissatisfaction and “trigger” the residential mobility process.
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53 One critique of this model is an underlying assumption that individuals move through the life-
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55 course in an orderly fashion. This ignores considerable variation in the timing and pattern of key family
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57 and household events (Geist and McManus 2008). A more attractive alternative to “straight-line” views of
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59 residential mobility is an approach grounded in the life-course perspective, which emphasizes diversity in
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4 the timing of events over the life span(Clark, Deurloo, and Dieleman 2003; Kendig 1984). As outlined by
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6 Elder (1985; 1994; 1998), we can conceptualize the life-course as a series of interconnected pathways that
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8 a person goes through as he or she ages. This approach encourages us to examine residential mobility (or
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10 any number of outcomes) in the context of individual life-course transitions and trajectories. These two
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12 concepts are central in life-course dynamics research, highlighting the importance of both short- and long-
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14 term patterns of behavior. Trajectories capture long-term dynamics, and refer to lifelines or pathways that
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16 unfold over the life span such as marriage, parenthood, and work life (Elder 1985). Trajectories are
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18 redirected in important ways by specific turning-points, or transitions(Elder, Johnson, and Crosnoe 2003).
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20 Transitions are always – and necessarily – embedded in the specific trajectories that give them meaning
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22 (Elder 1985). Across time, series of transitions give the form and structure to the larger trajectories. The
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24 trajectory of a marriage, for example, is not possible without first making the transition from unmarried to
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26 married.
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31 Indeed, one of the reasons there is such a strong association between age and mobility is that life-
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33 course transitions tend to be age-graded. Rates of mobility are highest in the young adult years, and
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35 typically start to decline in the early- and mid-30s. Age is so strongly tied to mobility because the young
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37 adult years are often typified by important life events such as homeownership, college attendance and
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39 completion, and marriage (South and Deane 1993). These abrupt life events change the definition of
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41 household needs fairly quickly. In the traditional framework, such changes lead to increases in
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43 dissatisfaction above an individual's threshold, and the growing dissatisfaction triggers relocations.
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47 The life-course perspective also aligns rather closely with the traditional decision-making model
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49 of residential mobility(see Rossi 1980). For example, one fundamental concept in the life-course
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51 perspective is the importance of human agency in decision-making(Elder 1998). Most moves are also said
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53 to be voluntary and based on purposive decisions and actions(Rossi 1980; Speare 1974). Furthermore,
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55 just as moves are constrained by the nature of an individual's awareness space, human agency in the life-
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57 course is shaped by the opportunities and constraints of historical time and an individual's social
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59 circumstances(Elder 1994). Thus, it is not just individual-level resources and restrictions that matter, as
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4 moves are also shaped by structural opportunities and constraints such as the local housing and labor
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6 markets (Mulder and Hooimeijer 1999). In the present context, it is useful to conceptualize individuals as
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8 moving through the life-course on a certain trajectory of mobility. Specific life events (or transitions)
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10 then redirect the mobility trajectory in the short-term, either making a move more or less likely. Some have
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12 conceptualized this process as a housing career, where each step in an individual's "career" brings one
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14 closer to the dwelling that best meets housing needs and aspirations (Clark et al. 2003; Kendig 1984).
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18 We can draw from existing accounts of residential mobility to distinguish expectations for short-
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20 and long-term trends. Research has shown, for example, that the likelihood of moving is highest when a
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22 couple gets married and shortly thereafter, but mobility rates decline as couples settle in to a suitable
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24 dwelling (Feijten 2005; Feijten and Mulder 2002; South and Deane 1993; Speare et al. 1975). We expect,
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26 then, that the transition into marriage will be associated with short-term mobility, and that larger patterns
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28 of stability associated with marriage will unfold as individuals spend more time in the state of marriage.
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30 Furthermore, Rossi (1980) argued that it is the *changes* in family size that render current dwellings
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32 inadequate. The transition into parenthood – and subsequent additions to family size – creates
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34 dissatisfaction with the current dwelling. Studies indicate that the birth of a child is correlated with
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36 residential mobility in the short-term (Kulu 2008; Kulu and Steele 2013; Long 1972), but households with
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38 school-aged children are much less likely to move because of strong social bonds that develop in and
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40 around the current residence (Bolan 1997; Long 1972). Similarly, a decrease in household size due to
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42 children leaving the home might trigger a move toward smaller dwellings in response to changes in
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44 housing needs.
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49 One of the strongest and most consistent predictors of residential mobility is the distinction
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51 between individuals who rent homes and individuals who own homes (Clark 1986; Landale and Guest
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53 1985; South and Deane 1993; Speare et al. 1975). Buying a home marks a significant turning point in the
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55 housing careers of individuals and households, and buying a home without moving is likely rare. Once
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57 the transition is complete, owning a home should lead to general housing satisfaction. The result would be
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59 a diminished likelihood of long-term mobility that emerges immediately after the transition into
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homeownership (Feijten 2005; Helderman, Mulder, and Van Ham 2004). In addition to changes in housing consumption due to household demographic transitions, potential homebuyers often weigh different factors when deciding whether to buy or rent. In particular, higher transaction costs have been associated with lower rates of residential mobility, while the expected length of stay in the future home boosts the likelihood of purchasing a home (Ermisch and Washbrook 2012; Roseman 1971; Haurin and Gill 2002; Van Ommeren and Van Leuvensteijn 2005). As elaborated on by Feijten (2005), the types of events that launch a person into life-course commitments, such as buying a home, getting married, or having children should be associated with increasing residential stability in the long-term, largely because exiting these life-cycle stages becomes more disruptive and costly over time.

Other events should work to enable mobility because of ties to socioeconomic standing. Human capital investments in education and employment give individuals the flexibility to find a dwelling that meets their housing needs (Rosenbaum and Friedman 2007; South and Crowder 1997). All things equal, this process of locational attainment typically leads to residence in more desirable neighborhoods (Alba and Logan 1993; Massey 1985). We focus on two SES advancements associated with the transition to adulthood: finishing college and entering into full-time employment. Because these human capital resources allow for upward social mobility, we expect that recent college graduates or recent full-time workers may remain initially mobile as they look for the best fit between housing needs and available housing. The average long-term trend may point towards residential stability, but it may take time for this trend to emerge. For one, long-term housing and neighborhood goals may not be fully formed in young adulthood. In addition, younger cohorts of college graduates are increasingly entering a volatile labor market, and often relegated to returning intermittently to the parental home for support (see Sage, Evandrou, and Falkingham 2013;).

Of course, not all life experiences correspond to voluntary moves, and researchers have distinguished between voluntary and involuntary moves (Rossi 1980). Involuntary moves are those that are triggered by events that are unconnected with housing satisfaction, such as rent increases, eviction, or building destruction. These types of events can precipitate a move regardless of housing satisfaction, and

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4 poor individuals are especially susceptible to involuntary mobility (Rossi 1980). In general, while overall
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6 rates of mobility in the United States have declined, rates remain higher for economically marginalized
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8 individuals (Fischer 2002). Clark (1986) and others also call attention to adjustment moves, which are
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10 driven by events (such as divorce or death of a partner) that, by definition, may require moving (Mulder
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12 and Wagner 2010; Sell 1983).
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15 It is important to examine a diversity of life-course transitions because unexpected events may be
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17 more strongly tied to long-term patterns of residential instability. Coulter and van Ham (2013) note that
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19 unforeseen events “may cause individuals to lack either the time or the resources to choose a new
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21 dwelling and location which meets their needs” (p. 1040). Such events may place individuals into new
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23 dwellings they might not otherwise select, ultimately perpetuating housing disequilibrium and leading to
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25 additional moves. It has been estimated that up to one-quarter of all mobility is unanticipated (Clark and
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27 Withers 2008).¹ We expect that these types of events will be strongly associated with short-term mobility,
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29 especially given the elevated sense of urgency that accompanies these triggers (Coulter 2013). Because
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31 these types of disruptive transitions are related to a lack or loss of resources (Mulder and Hooimeijer
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33 1999), individuals put on these trajectories might encounter pervasive long-term residential instability.
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38 The data we describe below allow us to capture events that may lead to involuntary mobility. Just
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40 as the creation of a new household through marriage predicts a move, the dissolution of a household
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42 through divorce typically requires at least one household member to move (Mulder and Wagner 2010;
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44 Speare and Goldscheider 1987). However, while marriage is an anticipated and planned event, divorce is
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46 more disruptive, and we expect that individuals who become divorced will remain initially mobile as they
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48 attempt to bring their housing disequilibrium back into balance. In addition, just as acquiring a full-time
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50 job brings in resources, the loss of a job reduces available resources, and contributes to downward social
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52 and spatial mobility into poor neighborhoods (South and Crowder 1997). Unemployment may compel or
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54 force individuals to move to match their dwelling to their new financial reality, although long-term trends
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58 ¹ Some have argued that these “deviant cases” do not necessarily negate the stages suggested by choice models of
59 mobility (Speare et al. 1975). Rather than falling outside of the process, unexpected or involuntary moves may
60 simply move people up on that process (i.e., searching for alternatives).
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might diverge from the short-term because of the financial costs associated with moving.

Finally, while not typically considered alongside other predictors of mobility, research has consistently shown that contact with America's criminal justice system affects housing and neighborhood outcomes (Massoglia, Firebaugh, and Warner 2013; La Vigne, Shollenberger, and Debus-Sherrill 2009; La Vigne, Visser, and Castro 2004; Visser and Courtney 2007; Warner 2015). The expanding size and scope of the correctional system over the past 40 years has altered the life-courses of crime-involved and disadvantaged young men (Pettit and Western 2004; Western 2006). After release from prison, supervision conditions tied to parole can create mobility as individuals adjust housing and neighborhood locations to residential restrictions (Harding, Morenoff, and Herbert 2013). Convicted sex offenders, for instance, face geographic restrictions regarding acceptable or unacceptable neighborhoods (Zgoba, Levenson, and McKee 2009). Furthermore, drug and violent offenders may experience mobility because of public housing bans triggered by a conviction (Geller and Curtis 2011). The current study adds to this literature by more explicitly modeling the transition from prison to the community. Descriptively, this appears to be a period of instability (La Vigne et al. 2004; Visser and Courtney 2007), but this trend has not been examined alongside other important correlates of mobility. And given the strong social stigma attached to a criminal conviction (Pager 2003), we anticipate that high rates of mobility among individuals with a history of incarceration will only slowly (if at all) decline across time.

In sum, residential mobility created by residential dissatisfaction is often the result of household and lifestyle changes brought on by the transition to adulthood. As a result, scholars are increasingly placing mobility in a life-course framework. We follow this line of inquiry and examine the short- and long-term effects of various life events on individual patterns of residential mobility. We examine both anticipated events, as well as unanticipated events that are generally unrelated to housing satisfaction. Our approach, outlined next, allows us to examine both average long-term effects (e.g., being married) as well as any growth or decay in these effects across time (e.g., duration of marriage).

Materials and Methods

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4 Data for this study are drawn from the 1979 National Longitudinal Survey of Youth (NLSY79), a
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6 nationally representative longitudinal social survey that has regularly interviewed an original cohort of
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8 12,686 respondents since 1979. Survey respondents were between 14 and 22 years old at the first wave of
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10 data collection, and were meant to be representative of U.S. residents born in the 1950s and 1960s.
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12 Interviews were conducted every year between 1979 and 1994, and since 1994 have been conducted
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14 every other year. The present study uses up to 23 waves of individual data covering the period from 1979
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16 to 2008. The Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) oversees data collection, and provides extensive public-use
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18 data containing detailed information on individual background and life-cycle characteristics. Interested
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20 researchers can also apply for restricted-access data that identifies the state, county, and census tract
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22 location of each respondent at each wave of data collection. In many cases, geographic identifiers cover
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24 nearly the entire sample, and, on average, full residential locators are available for 85% of the interviewed
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26 NLSY79 respondents at any given wave.² Because it follows the same groups of respondents across time,
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28 and because it provides estimates of both mobility and important life events, the NLSY79 is
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30 uniquely situated to study the life-course experiences of a nationally representative sample of young
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32 adults.
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37 *Residential Mobility*

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39 We use the restricted NLSY79 geographic identifiers, and primarily the census tract data, to create
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41 individual mobility trajectories across time. Census tracts are small and relatively permanent geographic
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43 areas that average approximately 4,000 residents. While the size of a census tract is somewhat dependent
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45 on population density, they still provide stable proxies for neighborhoods. We measure residential
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47 mobility by comparing census tract locations at consecutive waves of data collection. This entails
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49 transforming the 23 waves of individual data into series of mobility intervals. We define residential
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51 mobility as local moves that do not cross county lines (sometimes called inter-neighborhood mobility). A
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53 move occurs when a respondent lives in a different census tract – but same county – at the end of a
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58 ² Tract locators are available for roughly 90% of respondents in 14 of the 23 observations used here. In a few survey
59 waves, however, tract availability drops to around 65%. Outside of non-interview, it is not possible – to our
60 knowledge – to determine exactly why tract data are missing for a given respondent at a given wave.
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mobility interval (time t) than he or she did at the beginning of the interval (time $t-1$). The result is an indicator of residential mobility coded 1 if the respondent moved and 0 if the respondent did not move. This measure of local residential mobility is consistent with the definition of mobility suggested by the U.S. census (Lee and Hall 2009).³

Life events in the short- and long-term

Public-use NLSY79 data can be leveraged to capture important life-course transitions and trajectories. We consider a range of events considered part of the transition to adulthood: marriage, educational attainment, full-time employment, homeownership, and parenthood. We first broadly describe the measure, and then discuss how events are coded to capture short- and long-term trends. Our measure of marriage is based on a marital status indicator taken at every wave, and includes the categories unmarried, married, divorced, separated, and widowed.⁴ We mark educational attainment via the completion of 16 or more years of education (treated as a proxy for college graduation). A respondent is considered a full-time worker when he or she works at least 35 hours per week. Homeownership is measured through a survey item asking respondents if they currently own or are making payments on a home. Finally, parenthood is measured via the presence of residential children on the household roster. Comparing the number of children on a household roster across consecutive observations allows us to capture new children in the home.

In addition to these largely normative events, the data can also be utilized to capture disruptive and unanticipated life events. Because marital status is measured at each wave, we can capture divorce in addition to marriage. We also include a measure of unemployment, captured by a dichotomous variable coded 1 for respondents who report their labor market status as unemployed and 0 otherwise. Finally, we can utilize a residential indicator taken at each observation to identify respondents who have experienced

³ Person-observations with moves that cross county or state boundaries are omitted from the analysis. Results (available upon request) are substantively consistent whether residential mobility is coded as any move as opposed to local (within-county) moves.

⁴ To our knowledge, the NLSY79 data cannot be used to accurately capture cohabitation. This may introduce some bias to the marriage effect (particularly, an underestimate of the short-term effect) if recently married respondents were previously cohabitating in their own household.

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4 a spell of incarceration(see Western 2002). Imprisoned survey respondents are interviewed at the
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6 correctional facility in which they are housed, and researchers have utilized this survey protocol to
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8 operationalize incarceration as a distinct turning point in the life-course. Because this residence item is
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10 taken at every wave, the NLSY79 is unique in providing a time-varying account of incarceration and
11
12 post-prison life.
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15 Our interest lies in possibledivergent short-and long-term effects of life events on residential
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17 mobility.To properly capture these complex trends, we include three measures for life each event. The
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19 first is a dichotomous variable coded 1 in the interval in which the event occurs, and 0 otherwise. These
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21 transitions are based on a comparisonof each respective measure at time t and time $t-1$. We contend that
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23 these are important observations independent of the long-term trajectories because of more immediate
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25 changes to housingequilibrium.⁵We then use two measures to capturelong-term dynamics. The first is a
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27 dichotomous measure for each event that is coded 0 in all waves before the event and 1 in all waves after
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29 the event (if the respondent remains in the particular state).These measures are also coded 0 in those
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31 waves that events occur. This allows us to gauge the immediate effect of an event (the short-term
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33 indicator) as well as the average effect ofthatstate on local moving.Second, and because we anticipate
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35 some variation (growth or decay) in average long-term effects, we include ameasure that counts the
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37 number of observations since the event was observed. The count goes up by 1 for each observation the
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39 respondent stays in any particular state. When used collectively, the three measures indicate (1) the short-
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41 term effect tied to experiencing a life event, (2) the average long-term effect of a particular state, and (3)
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43 growth or decay in that effect across time.
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49 It is important to note that most of the transitions under consideration can happen more than once.
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51 Respondents can move in and out of the state of marriage, or add additional children to the family. In
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53 such cases, the short-term measure captures a wave-to-wave change (such as going from unmarried to
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57 ⁵ It can be unclear when a specific event occurs in the presence of missing observations. Currently, the short-term
58 measures are coded in reference to the last valid observation. The results presented here are consistent if we omit
59 cases with questionable transitions (available on request). The exception is the measure of the transition out of
60 prison, which is coded to missing if there is more than a single missing observation on either side of the prison spell.
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4 married), and can be coded 1 at multiple time points. The long-term measures, on the other hand,
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6 ascertain whether the respondent is currently in the particular state, as well as the length of time they have
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8 been in that state. The only exception is educational attainment, which marks the completion of a college
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10 degree. Following the transition, the respondent remains a college graduate for the duration of the survey.
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12 See Table 1 for more information on the specific coding and distributions of the various life events.
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15 *Control Measures*

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17 While not an explicit focus of the present study, we also control for other characteristics known to
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19 be associated with both the dependent and independent variables. We control for age because of the age-
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21 graded nature of important life-course transitions and resulting age-trend in mobility. The squared term for
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23 age is also included to capture declining mobility into adulthood. Because longer residential tenure in a
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25 dwelling reduces the chances of moving to a new address, we include a time-varying count of the number
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27 of observations since the last move. Furthermore, African Americans face a number of distinct
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29 disadvantages in the housing market, and, as a result, are typically less able to turn their mobility
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31 intentions into actual mobility (Crowder 2001; South and Deane 1993). We control for respondents
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33 race/ethnicity with dummy variables for white (the reference category), African American, and Hispanic
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35 respondents. We also control for gender with a dummy variable coded 1 for males and 0 for females.
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40 In order to separate the effects of various events from any socioeconomic gains made possible by
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42 those events, we include two additional socioeconomic controls. The first is a measure of residence in
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44 public or financially assisted housing (coded 1 if respondent reports receiving assistance for housing).
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46 The second is a measure of family poverty status, coded 1 if the respondent's total household income falls
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48 below the federal poverty line. Furthermore, given differences in rural and urban housing markets, we
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50 include a dichotomous indicator of urban or rural residence (based on Census definitions of Urbanized
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52 Areas and Urban Clusters). Finally, given that many respondents start the time series in the parental
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54 household, we include a control coded 1 if a parent appears on the household roster, and 0 otherwise.
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58 *Logic of Analysis and Analytic Strategy*

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60 Our measure of residential mobility is a dichotomous indicator that is coded 1 for movers and 0
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for non-movers at each observed mobility interval. We predict mobility using logistic regression techniques. Because the data are first transformed into mobility intervals, the working data set is in a person-observation format. This means that estimates from standard regression techniques can be biased because observations for the same respondent are likely correlated across time. With access to as many as 23 waves of data per respondent, we can utilize regression methods for panel data, which have a number of distinct advantages over cross-sectional research designs. Panel methods are especially useful when, as in the present case, the researcher wishes to examine change over time in an outcome measure using predictors that also vary across time (Johnson 1995). Longitudinal designs also make it easy to incorporate variation in the number and timing of data collection points without adding additional model complexity. These types of models utilize the total information that is available for each respondent, which in this case is an average of 13 mobility intervals per respondent. This feature of panel models is especially appealing in the present context because some mobility intervals are intentionally omitted from the analyses (those that cross county lines). This feature is also useful because our empirical models exclude observations where respondents are missing data on any of the variables under consideration.⁶

Panel models alter the standard regression equation by dividing unmeasured causes of the dependent variable (i.e., those not included in the model specification) into those that change over time and those that are constant over time (Allison 2005; Firebaugh, Warner, and Massoglia 2013). The time-stable individual effects can be handled in different ways. For example, the fixed effects approach treats the individual effects as fixed across time, and removes these effects from the model (whether they are measured or not). The result is an analysis where each individual serves as his or her own control (Allison 2005). Another approach, the random effects model, leaves the individual effects in the model, and treats them as comprised of a set of random variables with a specified probability distribution (as noted by

⁶ Both the dependent and independent variables raise unique issues related to missing data. Individuals that move are more difficult to locate, and this can lead to underestimates of mobility (Washbrook, Clarke, and Steele 2014). Indeed, those that move are more likely to be missing at the subsequent observation. Table A1 in the appendix also shows that individuals who experience incarceration are more likely to miss an interview, while becoming a parent, graduating college, and buying a home decrease the likelihood of a missed interview. This does not, however, seem to bias our results, as models stratified by ever/never missed an interview produce consistent results.

Allison [2009] the typical assumption is of a normal distribution and that these measures are independent of other variables in the model). Because random effects models do not discard variation between individuals, they allow for the inclusion of time-stable variables. This is a desirable feature, and so our empirical models presented below use the random effects specification of the logistic panel model.⁷ The probability of making a residential move, based on the expected short- and long-term effects of a given life event, for any individual i at time t is $\hat{p}_{it} = Pr(y_{it} = 1)$ can be modeled as a logit link function, formally expressed as follows:

$$\log\left(\frac{\hat{p}_{it}}{1-\hat{p}_{it}}\right) = \alpha_t + \mu_i + \beta_1 ShortTerm_{it} + \beta_2 LongTerm_{it} + \beta_3 TimeSince_{it} + \beta_4 X^* + \varepsilon_{it} \quad (1)$$

In Equation 1, the β_1 captures the short-term effect of a given life event (such as getting married) for individual i at time t . The β_2 coefficient captures the long-term or average effect of that event (such as the state of marriage more generally), and the β_3 captures growth or decay in the average effect across time. The long-term measures are used in combination with the measures of time elapsed to determine both average differences as well as differences that emerge across time (Osgood 2010). The X^* in Equation 1 represents the time-varying and time-stable control measures and their associated effects (the β_4). The intercept in a panel model, α_t , is allowed to vary across time (t), but not across individuals (no subscript i) (Allison 2005). We control for age, and account for any additional temporal trends with a variable capturing the survey wave.⁸ Finally, the μ_i term represents the unobserved time-stable individual effects (assumed here to be drawn from a set of random variables).

Results

⁷ It can often be difficult to select between random and fixed effects models. We conducted Hausman tests to estimate the degree to which unobserved person-specific differences are correlated with model covariates. Results suggested that the fixed effects specification might be more appropriate in many cases. However, the coefficients for the focal measures are consistent across the two approaches. As such, we focus on the random effects models, but also present the fixed effects specification of Table A2 in the appendix.

⁸ The NLSY79 follows a single cohort across time, meaning that the data are ill suited to examine cohort changes in mobility. There is also the potential for period effects that raise or lower the likelihood of mobility for all respondents. We control for survey wave, and alternative treatments of period effects (such as dummy variables for all survey waves or dummy variables for decade) produce consistent results.

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4 We start the presentation of results with descriptive information on the dependent and focal
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6 independent measures, as well as bivariate information on residential mobility following the respective
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8 life events. Table 1 provides descriptions and descriptive statistics for the measures used in the present
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10 study. Because the data are structured in person-observations (or mobility intervals), the means and
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12 standard deviations are based on averages across all observations. Thus, at any given way, about 17% of
13
14 the NLSY79 respondents make an inter-neighborhood move (across a census tract but within a county).
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16 For each life event we display descriptive statistics for the short-term (when the event happens), long-
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18 term (all observations following the event), and average duration (time spent in the state). The short-term
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20 statistics can be interpreted as the percent of NSLY79 respondents who experience the event at any given
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22 observation. Some life events occur with more frequency than others. At each wave about 10% become a
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24 full-time worker or have a child. About five percent of the respondents get married, buy homes, or
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26 become unemployed at any given survey wave. Other events are relatively rare. Between one and two
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28 percent of the sample completes college (1%), gets divorced (2%) or is released from prison (less than
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30 1%) at any given observation.
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Table 1. *Descriptive statistics for all variables (person-observations)*

	Description	Mean	SD	Short-term ^a		Long-term ^b		Duration ^c	
				Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD
Residential mobility	Coded 1 if tract at time t is different than tract at time $t-1$ (but same county); 0 otherwise.	.17	.38						
<i>Life Events</i>									
Marriage	Short-term measure captures transition from unmarried to married; long-term measure captures all subsequent married observations.			.04	.20	.38	.48	7.27	5.29
Parenthood	Short-term measure captures new resident children on household roster; long-term measure captures all subsequent observations with a child on the household roster.			.08	.28	.36	.48	4.53	3.64
Homeownership	Short-term measure captures first (or new) mention of owning/making payments on a home; long-term measure captures all subsequent observations as a homeowner.			.05	.22	.28	.45	5.81	4.46
Full-time employment	Short-term measure captures first (or new) observation respondent works 35+ hours per week; long-term measure captures subsequent observations as a full-time worker.			.11	.31	.39	.49	5.35	4.64
College degree	Short-term measure captures observation reports completing 16 years of education; long-term measure captures subsequent observations as a college graduate.			.01	.09	.13	.33	9.22	5.37
Divorce	Short-term measure captures transition from married to unmarried; long-term measure captures all subsequent divorced observations.			.02	.14	.10	.30	4.92	3.85
Unemployment	Short-term measure captures first (or new) observation unemployed (based on labor market status); long-term measure captures subsequent unemployed observations.			.06	.24	.04	.19	1.40	0.82
Incarceration history	Short-term measure captures release from prison (based on residence item); long-term measure captures all observations after prison.			.005	.07	.02	.13	5.10	4.30

(cont.) Table 1. *Descriptive statistics for all variables*

<i>Controls</i>				
Age	Age at time of interview	29.33	9.09	
African American	Coded 1 for African American respondents.	.28	.45	
Hispanic	Coded 1 for Hispanic respondents.	.18	.39	
White	Coded 1 for white respondents (reference).	.54	.50	
Male	Coded 1 for males, 0 for females.	.48	.50	
Family poverty	Coded 1 if respondent's household income is at or below federal poverty line at time of interview; 0 otherwise.	.17	.37	
Public housing	Coded 1 if respondent reports residing in public housing or receiving housing assistance; 0 otherwise.	.05	.21	
Urban residence	Coded 1 if respondent's current residence is classified as urban (based on Census definitions; 0 otherwise)	.79	.41	
Live with parents	Coded 1 if respondent reports a parental figure on the household roster; 0 otherwise.	.43	.50	
Length of residence	Time varying count of number of waves since last observed move.	5.33	5.39	

NOTES: a: Short-term events capture wave-to-wave transitions; b: Long-term events capture all observations following transition; c: Duration captures length of time following transition (and still in a respective state); Source: NLSY79; Sample size: 160,919 observations, 12,393 persons.

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4 The means and standard deviations under the column “Long-term” capture the average number of
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6 observations that NSLY79 participants spent in various states (such as marriage or homeownership). For
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8 example, the results show that respondents spent nearly 40% of the observations in full-time employment,
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10 married, or as parents. Less common states include observations following college graduation (13% of all
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12 observations), those following a divorce (10% of all observations), those spent unemployed (10% of all
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14 observations), and those following release from prison (2% of all observations).
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17 Also of interest in Table 1 is information on the time spent in various states (or what we label
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19 “Duration”). Earlier we discussed why some events should result in immediate and stable reductions in
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21 mobility (such as homeownership), while the stabilizing effects of others might emerge across time (such
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23 as marriage). The last columns in Table 1 show considerable variation in the length of exposure to various
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25 states. For example, respondents who graduate from college provide an average of approximately nine
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27 observations as college graduates. College graduation is the only event under consideration that can occur
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29 just once. All other events can occur multiple times, and the means in Table 2 represent the average
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31 duration per spell. Thus, the mean of 4.5 for parenthood indicates that respondents spend about four
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33 observations as parents until either the end of the study period or a new addition to the household. Any
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35 given marriage is observed for about seven observations, while any given spell of homeownership, full-
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37 time employment, divorce, and post-prison life last about five observations. Spells of unemployment are
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39 much shorter, with the average spell lasting less than two observations (and only 5% of spells last three or
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41 more observations). This is important to keep in mind when estimating long-term trends.
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46 The results in Table 1 thus indicate that some transitions and trajectories are more common than
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48 others. Not shown in Table 1, however, is important variation in the timing and occurrence of these
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50 events. The life-course perspective emphasizes that the transition to adulthood does not necessarily unfold
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52 in a timely or consistent manner, and our data reflect this diversity. At age 18, only 8% of the sample are
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54 married, just 2% are parents, and about 11% report working full time. There are no college graduates at
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56 this point, and just over 2% report owning a home. Divorce and prison are also very uncommon at
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58 younger ages (less than 1% at age 18), while 37% of the sample report being unemployed at least once
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by age 18. By age 30 some events become much more common than others. Two-thirds of the respondents have been married, over half have reported owning a home, over half have been a parent at least once, and over 80% have worked full-time. Approximately the same percent have graduated college (19%) as have experienced a divorce (22%), while exposure to prison remains largely uncommon (2.5% by age 30).

To get a sense of the bivariate relationships between the events and mobility, it is useful to consider observed mobility during observations when events occur (the short-term) and observations following the event (the long-term). Table 2 shows that moves are most common in the short-term for respondents who get married, buy homes, get divorced, or leave prison. The mobility rate for each event is higher in the short-term than the overall rate of 17%. The mobility rate is lower in the long-term for many events, such as marriage, parenthood, homeownership, college, and unemployment. It is higher than the observed rate in the long-term for divorce and for those observations following release from prison.

Table 2. *Bivariate associations between life events and mobility (short- and long-term)*

	Short-term mobility rate	Long-term mobility rate
Marriage	39.91%	13.53%
Parenthood	21.89	16.42
Homeownership	39.02	6.77
Full-time employment	20.56	17.99
College graduation	19.31	14.89
Divorce	43.33	26.27
Unemployment	21.08	12.73
Incarceration history	39.37	30.74

NOTES: Short-term mobility rates refer to observed mobility in those observations a respondent experiences a life event. Long-term mobility rates refer to observed mobility in all subsequent observations (if the respondent remains in the respective state).

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4 These descriptive statistics paint a useful picture of the occurrence of life events, and also provide
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6 useful initial information on how events are tied to residential mobility. In Table 3 we investigate these
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8 relationships further through a series of random effects logistic regression models. For each event under
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10 consideration, we include a measure that captures the actual transition (the short-term effect) and a
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12 measure that captures the subsequent trajectory(the long-term effect). Growth or decay in the average
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14 long-term effect is then considered in Table 4. We first examine each of the events individually,and then
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16 include all of them together in model 9. Controls for age, race, gender, public housing residence, poverty
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18 status, length of residence, urban residence, parent(s) in the household, and survey wave are included in
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20 each of the models. The results for these measures are omitted to conserve space and to focus on the
21
22 effects of the focal lifeevents under consideration (but see Table A3 in the appendix for more information
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24 on the control measures).
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28 The results in Model 1 of Table 3 start with marriage.The short-term coefficientshows that the
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30 transition from unmarried to married is associated with an increased likelihood of mobility, which
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32 confirms our descriptive findings.After adjusting for a range of controls including age, the odds of
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34 mobility are more than doubled in any mobility interval where respondents become married ($e^{0.75} = 2.11$).
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36 Once the transition is complete, and the respondent starts the trajectory of marriage, the odds of mobility
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38 are significantly reduced across the long-term. The negative and significant coefficient for the long-term
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40 measure of marriage shows that the likelihood of a move is cut in half in the observations following the
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42 entrance into marriage ($e^{-0.78} = 0.46$).These opposing short- and long-term trends associated with marriage
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44 are consistent with both our expectations and with existing research examining mobility patterns of newly
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46 married individuals.
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Table 3. *Residential mobility regressed on short- and long-term life events.*

	<i>Model 1</i>	<i>Model 2</i>	<i>Model 3</i>	<i>Model 4</i>	<i>Model 5</i>	<i>Model 6</i>	<i>Model 7</i>	<i>Model 8</i>	<i>Model 9</i>
<i>Marriage</i>									
Short-term	.75 *** (.03)								.81 *** (.03)
Long-term	-.78 *** (.02)								-.17 *** (.02)
<i>Parenthood</i>									
Short-term		-.12 *** (.03)							.18 *** (.03)
Long-term		-.48 *** (.02)							-.10 *** (.02)
<i>Homeownership</i>									
Short-term			.63 *** (.03)						.64 *** (.03)
Long-term			-1.69 *** (.02)						-1.49 *** (.03)
<i>Full-time employment</i>									
Short-term				.25 *** (.02)					.18 *** (.02)
Long-term				.03 (.02)					.09 *** (.02)
<i>College graduation</i>									
Short-term					.12 (.08)				.04 (.08)
Long-term					-.31 *** (.03)				-.15 *** (.03)
<i>Divorce</i>									
Short-term						1.35 *** (.04)			1.23 *** (.04)
Long-term						.54 *** (.02)			.27 *** (.03)
<i>Unemployment</i>									
Short-term							.22 *** (.03)		.21 *** (.03)
Long-term							-.33 *** (.04)		-.22 *** (.04)
<i>Incarceration history</i>									
Short-term								.87 *** (.08)	.59 *** (.08)
Long-term								.51 *** (.05)	.18 ** (.05)
Constant	-4.82 *** (.13)	-5.04 *** (.14)	-4.49 *** (.13)	-4.68 *** (.13)	-4.79 *** (.13)	-4.28 *** (.13)	-4.70 *** (.13)	4.64 *** (.13)	-4.34 *** (.14)
AIC	135989.7	138400.3	131409.8	138945.0	138908.8	137597.3	138932.5	139082.3	129091.6
BIC	136139.5	138550.1	131559.7	139094.8	139058.6	137747.2	138902.5	139039.3	129381.2

NOTES: * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$; Short-term events capture wave-to-wave transitions; Long-term events capture all observations following transition; All coefficients estimated using random effects logistic regression models; Controls not shown: age, race, gender, public housing residence, family poverty status, urban residence, live with parents, length of residence, wave; 160,919 person observations (12,393 persons); Standard errors in parentheses.

Moving across the models of Table 3 shows important similarities and differences in the relationships between the events and local moves. For example, homeownership (Model 3) is associated with mobility in much the same fashion as marriage. The odds of mobility are 88% higher in observations where respondents become homeowners ($e^{0.63} = 1.88$). Following the transition, on the other hand, homeownership itself is a strong predictor of residential stability. The odds of mobility are decreased by over 80% after a respondent has made the transition into homeownership ($e^{-1.69} = 0.18$). Indeed, accounting for homeownership results in a better model fit (smaller AIC and BIC) than accounting for any other single life event. Interestingly, both the short- and long-term measures of parenthood decrease the likelihood of mobility (Model 2), although a different picture emerges when all events are considered together (see Model 9 discussion below). Becoming a full-time worker increases the odds of mobility by almost 30%, but the long-term measure fails to reach conventional levels of statistical significant (Model 4). Completing college is associated with an increased likelihood of mobility, although this association is not statistically significant. College graduates are, however, less likely to move across the long-term than are respondents who lack a college degree (Model 5).

As discussed earlier, not all correlates of mobility are tied to normative events experienced during the transition to adulthood. Rather, unanticipated and disruptive events are also associated with residential mobility, and the results in Table 3 show that some of these events are tied to residential instability. Consistent with the bivariate association presented in Table 2, there is an especially strong relationship between divorce and local moves (Model 6). Getting divorced between survey waves nearly quadruples the odds of mobility ($e^{1.35} = 3.84$). This experience then puts respondents on a larger pattern of residential instability, with the average odds of mobility over 70% higher across all observations that a respondent remains divorced ($e^{0.54} = 1.72$). The same pattern is observed for respondents who experience incarceration (Model 8). The odds of mobility are more than doubled in mobility intervals that involve release from prison ($e^{0.87} = 2.38$). Furthermore, the odds of mobility at any given interval are 67% higher for ex-inmates, on average, than they are for respondents who experience no history of incarceration ($e^{0.51} = 1.67$). Unemployment, on the other hand, is associated with mobility more like marriage or

homeownership. Respondents are more likely to move when they first report their labor market status as unemployed, but, over the long-term, the odds of mobility decrease by almost 30% for respondents who are unemployed ($e^{-0.33} = 0.72$). Individuals who experience chronic unemployment likely lack the socioeconomic resources needed to make a move (Mulder and Hooimeijer 1999). However, as noted above, spells of unemployment are typically rather short, and so long-term trends should be interpreted with caution.

Finally, because many of these events are bundled, meaning they happen at or around the same points in the life-course, we include them together in Model 9. The full model provides the best model fit (smallest AIC and BIC), and suggests that the stabilizing effect of the transition to adulthood is driven by a combination of events. Respondents who enter into marriage, have children, become homeowners, and who finish their education settle into a pattern of residential stability. Indeed, considering all events together shifts the short-term parenthood effect from negative to positive, which is consistent with prior research. Chief among the predictors of mobility is homeownership, especially since becoming a homeowner is a large personal and financial commitment.

The long-term effect of full-time employment becomes positive and significant in the full model. That is, after accounting for the portion of this measure that operates through transitions such as marriage, parenthood, and homeownership, the average effect remains associated with elevated odds of mobility. However, the temporal trend following employment becomes a little clearer when duration of employment is considered below. Divorce and incarceration remain robust positive predictors of mobility over both the short- and long-term. This implies that these events place an individual on a trajectory of residential instability that lasts well past the experience of the event itself. Indeed, both divorce and incarceration are among the strongest short-term predictors of mobility, even after accounting for other important life events. The long-term effect of incarceration is reduced by approximately 65% from Model 8 to Model 9. Thus, formerly incarcerated individuals are more mobile, in part, because of post-prison struggles in relation to other correlates of mobility such as marriage and employment.

In sum, the results in Table 3 show that many life events associated with the transition to adulthood encourage mobility in the short-term and stability in the long-term. Unanticipated or disruptive life events, on the other hand, are associated with residential instability across time. We add additional context to these findings in three ways. First, we re-estimated all models from Table 3 using the more conservative fixed effects specification (see Table A2 of the appendix). As noted above, the fixed effects approach uses only within-person variation, essentially treating each respondent as his or her own control across time. Importantly, we see a nearly identical pattern of results for both the random and fixed effects models. The only relationships that change between the random and fixed effects approaches are the long-term effects of college graduation and incarceration. The finding for incarceration builds on the results from Table 3, and provides additional evidence that much of the long-term relationship between incarceration and mobility works through other model covariates. Second, we display the coefficients for all control measures in Table A3 of the appendix. These results, based on Model 9 of Tables 3 and A2, respectively, show that whites are more likely than blacks but less likely than Hispanics to move. Also more likely to move are respondents living in poverty or urban areas. Respondents who live in public housing are less likely to move, as are those who live with their parents at any given observation. Finally, to provide more insight on the strength of the associations in Table 3, we plot in Figure 1 the predicted probabilities of mobility based on the coefficients in Model 9. For reference, the dashed horizontal line displays observed mobility across all mobility intervals for the entire sample (moves occur about 17% of the time). Thus, bars above this line reflect a higher-than-observed probability of mobility while bars below this line reflect a lower-than-observed probability of mobility. All model covariates except those for the particular event under consideration are set to their mean values (as displayed in Table 1).

Beginning with short-term effects (represented by the light-gray bars) in Figure 1, the predicted probability of mobility is higher than observed for nearly all of the events under consideration. Marriage, homeownership, divorce, and incarceration are associated with the largest short-term increases in the probability of mobility. While all short-term coefficients from Table 3 are positive, this translates into predicted probabilities just over the observed average for parenthood, full-time employment, and

unemployment. There is only a very small (and non-significant) independent effect of college graduation after considering the other life events, leading to a predicted probability just below the observed average.

Figure 1. Predicted probability of mobility based on life events (short- and long-term effects).

NOTES: Probabilities based on Model 9 of Table 3. All model covariates (besides the life event measures) set to their mean values.

The figure also shows an interesting pattern between the short-term and long-term trends. Again, the biggest differences are between the short- and long-term trends for marriage and homeownership, respectively. However, across all of the normative life events generally considered part of the transition to

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4 adulthood, the long-term (or average) trend is towards mobility below the observed average. This is not
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6 the case, however, for divorce and incarceration. Both of these events are associated with a higher-than-
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8 observed probability of mobility in both the short- and long-term – the only events with long-term
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10 probabilities over the observed average.
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13 The results in Table 3 and Figure 1 are based on an assumption of average long-term effects (the
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15 long-term measure is coded 1 in all post-event observations). But it was anticipated that some events
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17 would immediately reduce long-term mobility, while the effects of others might grow or erode across
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19 time. Such trends are explored in Table 4, which contains three sets of models. The first two consider the
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21 effects of each event individually, build directly on the results from Models 1 through 8 of Table 3. The
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23 first set of results adds a linear trend (time since the event), and the second adds a non-linear trend (time
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25 since plus the squared term). The final set of results includes all events collectively, based on the
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27 appropriate stable or varying long-term trends. The short-term coefficients can be interpreted in Table 4
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29 as the independent effect of experiencing a given life event. The long-term coefficients should be
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31 interpreted alongside the duration coefficients. The coefficients for time since and the squared term of
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33 time since (if applicable) are added to or subtracted from the average long-term coefficient for that event.
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35 As such, these coefficients indicate how much the average effects grow or decay across time.
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40 The results in Table 4 suggest a stable long-term effect for some events, and a varying effect for
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42 others. For instance, the time-varying counts are not significant for either homeownership or divorce. The
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44 long-term measures for these events change little from those presented in Models 3 and 6 of Table 3,
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46 respectively. Thus, the long-term stabilizing effect of homeownership and the long-term destabilizing
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48 effect of divorce do not vary across time.
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Table 4. *Growth or decay in the effects of life events on residential mobility.*

	<i>Events individually</i>				<i>Events collectively</i>	
	<i>Linear trend</i>		<i>Linear and squared trend</i>			
<i>Marriage</i>						
Short-term	.750	(.030) ***	.748	(.030) ***	.802	(.033) ***
Long-term	-.445	(.023) ***	-.276	(.032) ***	-.159	(.035) ***
Time since	-.063	(.003) ***	-.136	(.009) ***	-.005	(.010)
(Time since) ²	--	--	.005	(.001) ***	<-0.001	(.001)
<i>Parenthood</i>						
Short-term	-.119	(.025) ***	-.119	(.028) ***	.186	(.028) ***
Long-term	-.351	(.023) ***	-.239	(.028) ***	.087	(.030) **
Time since	-.037	(.030) ***	-.104	(.010) ***	-.069	(.011) ***
(Time since) ²	--	--	.006	(.001) ***	.003	(.001) ***
<i>Homeownership</i>						
Short-term	.633	(.027) ***	--	--	.642	(.027) ***
Long-term	-1.674	(.034) ***	--	--	-1.444	(.026) ***
Time since	-.002	(.005)	--	--	--	--
(Time since) ²	--	--	--	--	--	--
<i>Full-time employment</i>						
Short-term	.240	(.023) ***	.238	(.023) ***	.170	(.024) ***
Long-term	.290	(.022) ***	.396	(.028) ***	.249	(.029) ***
Time since	-.061	(.003) ***	-.112	(.009) ***	-.054	(.009) ***
(Time since) ²	--	--	.004	(.001) ***	.002	(.001) ***
<i>College graduation</i>						
Short-term	.133	(.077)	.134	(.077)	.040	(.078)
Long-term	.147	(.043) **	.355	(.060) ***	.007	(.063)
Time since	-.062	(.005) ***	-.135	(.016) ***	-.048	(.017) **
(Time since) ²	--	--	.004	(.001) ***	.003	(.001) **
<i>Divorce</i>						
Short-term	1.346	(.039) ***	--	--	1.218	(.042) ***
Long-term	.561	(.033) ***	--	--	.259	(.027) ***
Time since	-.005	(.006)	--	--	--	--
(Time since) ²	--	--	--	--	--	--
<i>Unemployment</i>						
Short-term	.220	(.028) ***	--	--	.200	(.029) ***
Long-term	-.807	(.065) ***	--	--	-.209	(.044) ***
Time since	.383	(.035) ***	--	--	--	--
(Time since) ²	--	--	--	--	--	--
<i>Incarceration hisotry</i>						
Short-term	.871	(.084) ***	.870	(.084) ***	.571	(.085) ***
Long-term	.655	(.076) ***	.469	(.109) ***	.276	(.077) ***
Time since	-.031	(.012) *	.056	(.038)	-.031	(.012) *
(Time since) ²	--	--	-.006	(.003) *	--	--

NOTES: * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$; All coefficients estimated using random effects logistic regression models; Controls not shown: age, race, gender, public housing residence, family poverty status, urban residence, live with parents, length of residence, wave; 160,919 person observations (12,393 persons); Standard errors in parentheses.

Long-term effects vary considerably for other events. The linear trend for marriage suggests that post-marriage reductions in mobility rates continue to decline across time, especially early in the marriage. In addition to the negative average long-term effect of marriage, each additional married observation reduces the odds of mobility by about 13% ($e^{-0.136} = 0.87$). When considering the event of marriage individually, the positive squared term also shows that mobility reductions occur primarily during the first few years of marriage, and then level off as respondents spend more time married. A similar dynamic is observed for parenthood, although the short-term negative effect is still observed in a reduced model. The average long-term effects for both college graduation and full-time employment become positive when the temporal trend is added, but there is a significant nonlinear trend for each event. The first few observations following the event are associated with an elevated odds of mobility (as indicated by the positive long-term coefficients), but this erodes within a few observations following the respective transitions (as indicated by the negative coefficients for time since the event). The long-term association between incarceration and mobility starts to weaken across time at a fairly modest rate. Each additional observation after prison reduces the odds of mobility by about 3% ($e^{-0.031} = 0.97$). Formerly incarcerated respondents are thus most mobile early in the reentry process, and slowly regain some residential stability. The linear trend of unemployment suggests that reductions in mobility in the waves following unemployment erode rather quickly. However, as discussed above, very few spells of unemployment last beyond three observations, and so a model including the squared term was not included.

The final model in Table 4 includes all events collectively. This model builds on Model 9 of Table 3 by incorporating the linear or nonlinear trends observed in the first two sets of models from Table 4. This also allows us to build on Figure 1 by plotting some of these time trends in Figure 2. Readers should note that we only plot those events that showed a significant time trend in the individual models of Table 4 (homeownership, divorce, and unemployment are thus not plotted).

Figure 2. Predicted probability of mobility across time.

NOTES: Probabilities based on Table 4 “Events collectively” models. Homeownership, divorce, and unemployment not plotted because of no significant time trend. Events are set to occur at age 25. All model covariates (besides the life event measures) set to their mean values.

Briefly, the temporal trends for marriage are reduced below conventional levels of statistical significance in the full model of Table 4, although both the short-term and average long-term effects remain significant. Thus, married respondents start to move less across time because they experience other stabilizing events (such as buying a home). The figure reflects this trend, showing a quick and stable decline in mobility following marriage after adjusting for other model covariates. Having a child increases the likelihood of mobility, but this elevated rate declines across time. Entering into the world of full-time employment increases rates of mobility, and they remain elevated in the early parts of work the

trajectory. In fact, Figure 2 suggests that the period shortly after starting full-time work is more strongly correlated with mobility than the immediate transition itself. Divorce and incarceration increase mobility in both the short- and long-term. The relationship between divorce and mobility does not significantly change across time (not plotted in Figure 2), while the relationship between incarceration and mobility is shown to slowly diminish across time.

Conclusion

Scholars are increasingly turning to the life-course perspective to provide a more complete picture of individual mobility (Clark and Withers 2008; Coulter 2013; Feijten and Mulder 2002; Geist and McManus 2008; Kulu and Milewski 2008; Mulder and Hooimeijer 1999). The present study adds to this body of research by adopting principles of the life-course to examine how various life events impact residential mobility across time. Starting from a choice-based model of mobility, we anticipated that those life events associated with the transition to adulthood would be associated with short-term residential mobility, but long-term residential stability. In other words, life-course transitions should create mobility while life-course trajectories should create stability.

Drawing on a combination of public- and restricted-use longitudinal data from the United States, we found that the independent effects of many of those events tied to the transition to adulthood followed the expected pattern. However, long-term stability was more immediate for some events compared to others. For instance, entering into homeownership is associated with mobility in the short-term, but with long-term stability that begins immediately following the transition. Alternatively, the stabilizing effect of marriage takes some time to fully emerge as newly married couples search for their ideal dwelling. The additional nuance in mobility behavior that we are able to capture by examining both the short- and long-term effects of a variety of life events is the primary contribution of this study. When life events were considered as a bundle, the results show that the long-term declines in mobility are driven by a few key events. Not surprisingly, making the transition into homeownership is the strongest correlate of long-term residential stability. But over-and-above homeownership, married respondents, parents, and college

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4 graduates all see reduced mobility rates across time.
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6 A second notable contribution of the present study is that we did not restrict our inquiry to just
7 those normative events that mark the transition into adulthood. Rather, our results also demonstrated that
8 residential mobility is strongly affected in both the short- and long-term by unanticipated and disruptive
9 life events. Again, the short-term effects of events such as divorce, unemployment, or incarceration are
10 largely anticipated. Generally at least one partner will need to move when a marriage comes to an end, for
11 instance, and some work suggests that there are gender dynamics associated with these moves such that
12 women are more likely to move out of the household than men (Mulder and Wagner 2010). But more
13 striking here are the long-term trends. In the wake of the transition into the state of divorce or entrance
14 into the ex-felon class, the likelihood of moving remains elevated across time. For both of these events,
15 short- and long-term effects are well-above the average amount of observed mobility. Divorced
16 individuals remain more mobile across time, while rates of mobility start to drop slowly for individuals
17 with a history of incarceration.
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33 While existing work has shown that the period following prison is a time of increased mobility
34 (see Warner 2015), our findings are the first to show that that the transition from prison to community
35 leads many people to new neighborhoods, even after accounting for a range of known correlates of
36 mobility. Recently released individuals may move because the pre-prison household relocated during
37 confinement, because of the strain that incarceration puts on relationships, or because of a desire to start
38 over following incarceration. In addition, incarceration is known to create a host of difficulties following
39 release from prison. Formerly incarcerated individuals struggle to find employment, are more likely to
40 experience divorce, and suffer a range of mental and physical health deficiencies (see Wakefield and
41 Uggen 2010). These collateral consequences of incarceration contribute to long-term residential
42 instability among the formerly incarcerated. Becoming unemployed, however, does not operate like the
43 other disruptive events. While the short-term effect is similar, the long-term effect is stabilizing. It could
44 be that individuals relocate after losing a job, and remain in place until a new job opportunity allows them
45 to put their housing career back on track. However, recent research suggests that unemployed people may
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4 lack the necessary resources to undertake a move, particularly given that securing a job *before* the move
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6 can be a key motivating factor (see Morrison and Clark 2011).
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9 To provide proper context for our findings, it is important to consider some limitations with our
10 data and approach. First, measuring mobility using residential locators collected through social survey
11 data will miss some types of moves (Clark 1986). For example, moves that begin and end in the same
12 census tract will be missed. This is unfortunate because mobility is constrained by awareness space, and
13 most moves are local (Lee and Hall 2009; Stoll 2013). This issue may be especially relevant in less
14 densely populated areas where census tracts are quite large. This could require a person to travel a
15 substantial distance to actually cross a census tract boundary (Lee et al. 2008). Furthermore, because
16 mobility is measured by comparing successive waves of data collection, a respondent who moves twice
17 between survey waves will be coded as making just one move. In some cases the respondent could
18 potentially be coded as not having moved at all if the second move is back to the original census tract.
19 This issue also becomes more relevant later in the data collection period when interviews take place every
20 other year (after 1994). Finally, survey attrition rates might also bias observed mobility. Individuals who
21 drop out of the survey may have more precarious mobility patterns than those respondents who are easily
22 located and interviewed at each wave of data collection. Indeed, mobility itself contributes to missing
23 observations. Taken together, these limitations likely mean that the estimates of mobility observed in the
24 NLSY79 should be considered fairly conservative.
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44 These limitations aside, this study makes important contributions to our knowledge of residential
45 mobility over the life course. Several scholars have commented on the growing rootedness of Americans
46 (Cooke 2011, 2013; Fischer 2002). More recently, however, the effects of the Great Recession have
47 spurred an increase in local moves, while long-distance migration continues to decline (Stoll 2013). Our
48 findings show how the shifting nature of the transition to adulthood might contribute to larger population
49 flows. Homeownership rates, for example, climbed steadily during the 1990s and the early part of the
50 2000s, and as this research shows, rates of mobility drop dramatically for individuals who transition into
51 homeownership. Yet, more recently, homeownership rates have been declining particularly among groups
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4 most affected by the recent housing crisis, namely African Americans and Latinos (Rugh2015; Sharp and
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6 Hall 2014). Marriage rates are also on the decline. Delayed entries into, or increasing exits from,
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8 residentially stabilizing trajectories like marriage and homeownership could be contributing to these
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10 recent (or possibly future) trends in local mobility. Indeed, a useful extension of our study would be to
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12 examine these shifting dynamics by more explicitly focusing on the timing of events among recent
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14 cohorts of young adults. Additional research should also push for more specificity in the data and
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16 measures. We capture both life eventsand residential mobility by comparing consecutive waves of data
17
18 collection. This means transitions and moves happen at the same time. As such, the present findings
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20 should be examined in relation to data that has more specific detail on the timing of both life events and
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22 residential mobility. We also join others in a call for approaches that more explicitly place mobility within
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24 core principles of the life-course perspective (Coulter et al. 2015). Lives unfold across both time and
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26 space, and additional research should examine how the larger social context shapes the relationship
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28 between life events and residential mobility.
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33 In conclusion, our study provides a more complete and nuanced picture of residential mobility
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35 than typically provided. The results should push traditional accounts of mobility to consider certain life
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37 events that might initiate moving in ways that fall outside conventional choice-based models. It is
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39 important that future accounts of mobility consider the diverse relationships between life events and
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41 residential mobility.
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APPENDIX

Table A1. Logistic regression models predicting a missed interview (NLSY79).

	<i>Model 1</i>		<i>Model 2</i>		<i>Model 3</i>	
	Coef	SE	Coef	SE	Coef	SE
Residential mobility	.19	(.04) ***	.13	(.04) ***	.05	(.04)
Age			.11	(.01) ***	.16	(.01) ***
(Age) ² X 100			-.11	(.02) ***	-.17	(.02) ***
White (reference)	--	--	--	--	--	--
African American			.03	(.04)	-.10	(.04) *
Hispanic			.30	(.04) ***	.24	(.04) ***
Male			.27	(.03) ***	.19	(.04) ***
Full time employment					.00	(.03)
Parenthood					-.22	(.04) ***
Marriage					-.02	(.07)
College graduation					-.12	(.05) *
Homeownership					-.44	(.04) ***
Divorce					.02	(.04)
Unemployment					.04	(.05)
Incarceration history					.19	(.08) *
Constant	-3.46	(.02) ***	-5.86	(.19) ***	-6.45	(.21) ***
-2 log likelihood	47407.74		46628.19		46338.45	
Person observations	170,302		170,302		170,302	
Persons	12,669		12,669		12,669	

NOTES: * p < .05, ** p < .01, *** p < .001; all predictors lagged by 1 observation (predict missing the subsequent interview)

Table A2. Fixed effects logistic regression models predicting inter-neighborhood mobility.

	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4	Model 5	Model 6	Model 7	Model 8	Model 9
<i>Marriage</i>									
Short-term	.62 ***							.75 ***	
	(.03)							(.04)	
Long-term	-.81 ***							-.15 ***	
	(.02)							(.03)	
<i>Parenthood</i>									
Short-term		-.27 ***						.09 **	
		(.03)						(.03)	
Long-term		-.66 ***						-.21 ***	
		(.02)						(.03)	
<i>Homeownership</i>									
Short-term			.62 ***					.64 ***	
			(.03)					(.03)	
Long-term			-1.72 ***					-1.52 ***	
			(.03)					(.03)	
<i>Full-time employment</i>									
Short-term				.23 ***				.14 ***	
				(.02)				(.03)	
Long-term				.16 ***				.15 ***	
				(.02)				(.02)	
<i>College graduation</i>									
Short-term					.20 *			.12	
					(.08)			(.09)	
Long-term					-.17 ***			-.02	
					(.04)			(.05)	
<i>Divorce</i>									
Short-term						1.21 ***		1.12 ***	
						(.04)		(.05)	
Long-term						.52 ***		.25 ***	
						(.03)		(.04)	
<i>Unemployment</i>									
Short-term							.10 **	.13 ***	
							(.03)	(.03)	
Long-term							-.47 ***	-.32 ***	
							(.05)	(.05)	
<i>Incarceration history</i>									
Short-term							.82 ***	.43 ***	
							(.10)	(.10)	
Long-term							.53 ***	.08	
							(.08)	(.08)	
AIC	93348.6	94875.8	89592.4	95552.6	95627.1	94698.8	95523.0	95572.6	87873.4
BIC	93446.5	94973.7	89690.3	95650.5	95725.1	94796.7	95620.9	95670.5	88108.4

NOTES: * p < .05, ** p < .01, *** p < .001; Controls not show: age, public housing residence, family poverty status, live with parents, urban residence, length of residence, wave; 132,243 person observations (9,114 persons); Standard errors in parentheses.

Table A3. Control variables; random and fixed effects specifications.

	<i>Random effects</i>		<i>Fixed effects</i>	
	Coef	SE	Coef	SE
White (reference)	--	--	--	--
African American	-.05	(.02) *	--	--
Hispanic	.09	(.02) ***	--	--
Male	.03	(.02)	--	--
Age	.18	(.01) ***	.38	(.02) ***
(Age) ² X 100	-.32	(.01) ***	-.43	(.02) ***
Public housing	-.09	(.03) **	-.15	(.04) ***
Family poverty	.18	(.02) ***	.09	(.02) ***
Live with parents	-.69	(.02) ***	-.65	(.02) ***
Urban residence	.44	(.02) ***	.19	(.03) ***
Time since last move	-.07	(.00) ***	.04	(.00) ***
Constant	-4.34	(.14) ***	--	--
-2 log likelihood	129033.57		87825.35	

NOTES: * p < .05, ** p < .01, *** p < .001; Not shown are coefficients and standard errors for all short- and long-term life events (see Table 3, Model 9)