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DIFFERENTIAL UNEMPLOYMENT AND CHARACTERISTICS OF THE UNEMPLOYED IN THE UNITED STATES, 1940-1954

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PUBLIC and professional interest in unemployment seems to be positively correlated with its incidence. Normally there is an appreciable lag, however, between increased levels of unemployment and its intensive analytical study. This Conference bears testimony to the prescience of its leaders. It provides a full-scale analysis of unemployment while we are still experiencing and, we hope, just as we are coming out of, our third postwar period of "economic adjustment." This timing is especially remarkable in that the Conference date was set about two years ago.

Most of us recall an even more intensive interest in unemployment about two decades ago. We were then in the midst of the most severe depression we have ever experienced. We knew that there was a large volume of joblessness but we did not know, and we were not to know for some eight years after the onset of the depression, just how many unemployed there were.[1] We knew little about the characteristics —demographic, social, or economic—of the unemployed. We did know something about the characteristics as well as the number of the unemployed on the relief rolls and on work relief programs.[2]

Our ability to hold this Conference to consider papers of the type prepared is a significant indication of the great progress which has been made since the thirties in the definition and measurement of unemployment. This is not to say that no further problems of concept or measurement exist. But the problems which plague us now are minor compared with those created by the almost complete ignorance of the thirties. The adoption by the Bureau of the Census of the labor force approach in the measurement of the nation's labor supply and the provision for the Current Population Survey giving monthly statistics on the total labor force, employment, and unemployment, have

Note: Grateful acknowledgment is made of the services of Dr. Evelyn M. Kitagawa, who assisted the writer in the preparation of several sections of this paper, and in its editing.

[1] Calvert L. Dedrick and Morris H. Hansen, *The Enumerative Check Census*, Census of Partial Employment, Unemployment and Occupations: 1937, Vol. IV, 1938.

[2] For example see Philip M. Hauser, *Workers on Relief in the United States, March 1935*, Works Progress Administration, 1938.

provided us with about fifteen years of current data on our labor supply and have illuminated vast areas of ignorance about its structure and dynamics. The knowledge we have gained has included information on the characteristics of the unemployed. Some of this information was summarized in a paper presented before the annual meetings of the American Statistical Association about five years ago.[3]

It was one of the conclusions of that paper that: "As already noted, the volume and rate of unemployment have fluctuated over a wide range during the past decade (1940-1949). However, especially if the war period is excluded, it has been essentially the same population groups, and the same economic groups, that repeatedly showed the highest incidence of unemployment."[4]

This conclusion is further bolstered by the analysis of unemployment data since 1949. We have experienced further changes in economic climate as a result of the partial remobilization incident to the increased temperature of the cold war and the Korean episode; and further demobilization during the period of the uneasy Korean truce and government economy measures. Unemployment rates declined after the recession highs of 1949 and increased again with the recession of 1953-1954. But the pattern of unemployment rates has remained essentially the same.

1. Unemployment, 1940-1954

An analysis of differential unemployment rates and the characteristics of the unemployed must be framed by a consideration of the volume and incidence of unemployment. Unemployment rates, as obtained by direct measurement since 1940, have varied on an annual average basis from a high of 14.6 per cent in 1940, to a low of 1.2 per cent in 1944 (see Table 1 and Chart 1). The high unemployment rate of 1940, based on an average volume of 8.1 million unemployed, represented, of course, a heritage from the depressed thirties. This unemployment heritage was dissipated, however, first with defense, and then with all-out war, production. By 1944, average unemployment for the year, under war-manpower controls, reached the remarkably low level of 700,000 and dropped to the unprecedented low rate of less than 1 per cent in October of that year.

With the war's end in 1945 and continued demobilization through 1946, unemployment increased. Annual average unemployment in 1945 and in 1946 was still relatively low, however, and far below the levels anticipated by many economists during the period of postwar readjust-

[3] Philip M. Hauser and Robert B. Pearl, "Who are the Unemployed?" *Journal of the American Statistical Association*, December 1950, pp. 479-500.

[4] *Ibid.*, p. 486.

TABLE 1

Unemployment Rates,[a] by Sex, Annual Average, 1940-1954
(*per cent*)

Year	*Both Sexes*	*Male*	*Female*
1940[b]	14.6	14.3	15.5
1941	9.9	9.5	11.2
1942	4.7	4.3	5.8
1943	1.9	1.5	2.7
1944	1.2	1.0	1.7
1945	1.9	1.8	2.2
1946	3.9	4.4	2.8
1947	3.6	3.7	3.2
1948	3.4	3.3	3.6
1949	5.5	5.5	5.4
1950	5.0	4.9	5.3
1951	3.0	2.6	3.9
1952	2.7	2.4	3.1
1953	2.4	2.3	2.6
1954 (June)	5.1	4.8	5.7

[a] Percentage of the total or appropriate part of the civilian labor force that is unemployed. This definition is used throughout this paper.

[b] Based on revised census data and estimates for January and February.

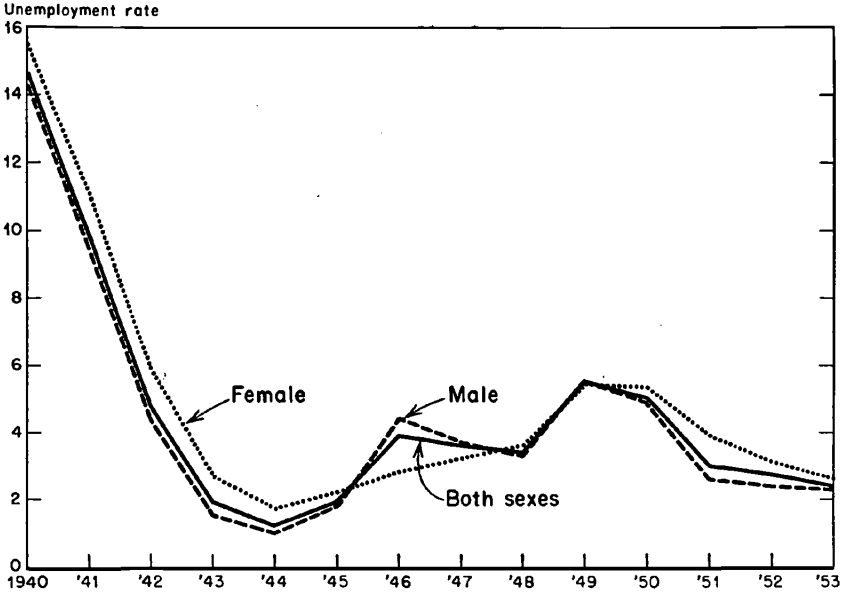
Source: Bureau of the Census.

ment. Average annual unemployment declined somewhat during 1947, and again in 1948, but increased appreciably during the recession experience in 1949 and 1950. With the partial mobilization occasioned by the Korean War, unemployment rates again declined during the three years 1951-1953, reaching a low of 2.4 per cent for the year 1953. Economic readjustment following the Korean truce, however, produced higher unemployment rates in the last months of 1953 and first half of 1954 (when this paper was written). In April of 1954, unemployment was at a level of about 5 per cent, approximately the same as that experienced in April 1949 and April 1950.

By reason of the availability of the Census Bureau's Current Population Survey—Monthly Report on the Labor Force—it is possible to measure not only the volume of unemployment, but also some broad characteristics of the unemployed throughout the period 1940 to the present time. It is thus possible to analyze unemployment rates and the characteristics of the unemployed in a variety of economic situations including relatively high-level depression unemployment (1940), low-level wartime unemployment under conditions of wartime manpower controls (1944), postwar adjustment unemployment (1949), low-level unemployment with partial remobilization for the Korean incident (1953), and increased levels of unemployment during the economic readjustment following the Korean truce (1953-1954).

CHART 1

Unemployment Rates, by Sex, Annual Average, 1940-1953



Note: Unemployment rates are percentages of the total or appropriate part of the civilian labor force that is unemployed.
Source: Table 1.

2. *Differential Unemployment Rates*

The incidence of unemployment varies among the different industrial and occupational sectors of the economy; and within occupational and industrial groupings has a differential impact on various segments of the population, classified by personal characteristics. Unemployment rates during the period 1940 to 1954 will be examined with two objectives in mind. The first is to ascertain the differential patterns that may be observed; the second is to see whether differential patterns of unemployment have varied under the different sets of economic conditions and fluctuating levels of unemployment outlined above.

SEX DIFFERENTIALS

Annual average unemployment rates for females exceeded those for male workers for eleven of the fourteen years in the annual series from 1940 through 1953. Only during the postwar years of 1946 and 1947, when female labor force participation rapidly decreased, and the recession year 1949, did female unemployment rates fall appreciably below those of male (see Table 1 and Chart 1).

The annual average female unemployment rate was about 8 per cent above the male rate in 1940. This gap increased each year to reach a high at which the female unemployment rate was 80 per cent above the male in 1943. During this period, however, total unemployment rates decreased considerably. At the same time, the number of females in the civilian labor force greatly increased while the number of males in the civilian labor force greatly decreased. The relatively higher female unemployment rates during this war period, then, reflect more the increase in female, and decrease in male, civilian labor force participation than differential vulnerability of employed persons to unemployment.

Subsequent to 1943, the gap between male and female unemployment rates declined through 1945. In 1945, annual average female unemployment rates were 22 per cent above male unemployment.

During 1946 and 1947, female unemployment rates fell below those of males. However, the female labor force was shrinking rapidly with the postwar contraction of the total labor force, while demobilized GIs were returning to the civilian labor force. Relatively low female unemployment during these years may reflect the female exodus from, and male return to, the civilian labor force rather than the differential vulnerability of employed persons to unemployment.

Female unemployment was higher than male in 1948, but lower in 1949. During both of these years, the number of the women in the labor force increased but the increase was greater between 1947 and 1948 than between 1948 and 1949.

Beginning with 1950 and the increase in female labor force participation with partial remobilization for the Korean incident, the gap between female and male unemployment rates again increased to reach a peak difference of about 50 per cent in 1951. It then gradually declined until 1953 when the female unemployment rate was 13 per cent above the male level.

The abnormal war and postwar conditions during the period from 1940 to date make it difficult to reach any conclusion about the differential vulnerability of employed persons, by sex, to unemployment. Large increases or decreases in the size of the female labor force and male transfers to and from military service to civilian employment distort the unemployment rate as a measure of such differential vulnerability.

It would seem that at least a tentative generalization about the differential vulnerability of male and female workers to unemployment may be drawn, however, from an analysis of the sex differences in unemployment at periods of relatively high levels of unemployment. During the period of observation, 1940 to 1954, there were five periods

in which total unemployment reached a level of 5 per cent or more, namely 1940, 1941, 1949, 1950, and 1954 (the first half). In addition, reliable data are available for November 1937 at which time about a fifth of the labor force was unemployed.[5] In five of these six periods, female unemployment rates were well above those of the male, ranging from a level of 27 per cent above the male in 1937, to 8 per cent above the male in 1940 and in 1950. Only in 1949, with a total unemployment rate of 5.5 per cent, did the female unemployment rate (5.4 per cent) fail to exceed that of the male (5.5 per cent).[6]

However, this type of analysis also fails to indicate the differential vulnerability to unemployment of employed men and women. To obtain a measurement of the differential vulnerability to unemployment of the employed ("disemployment"), it is necessary to eliminate the portion of total unemployment that arises from reasons other than a shift from employment to unemployment; more specifically, from a change from non-labor-force status to unemployment. Fortunately, the availability of "gross change" statistics tabulated regularly by the Bureau of the Census since May 1948 makes such an analysis possible (see Table 2).

TABLE 2

Additions to Unemployment, by Previous Status and Sex, Annual Average, 1949-1952

(*per cent*)

Previous Status and Sex	*1949*	*1950*	*1951*	*1952*
Both sexes	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Employed	68.8	62.9	59.0	63.2
Not in labor force	31.2	37.1	41.0	36.8
Male	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Employed	79.1	74.3	71.0	74.5
Not in labor force	20.9	25.7	29.0	25.5
Female	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Employed	47.3	43.1	42.8	44.8
Not in labor force	52.7	56.9	57.2	55.2

Source: Bureau of the Census.

As a prelude to this analysis, it is desirable to note that gross changes in labor force participation were much greater for women than for men. For example, in 1951 average monthly gross changes in labor

[5] Dedrick and Hansen, *op.cit.*, p. 20.

[6] By reason of sampling error the data for individual years are relatively unstable. The probability of female unemployment rates exceeding those of male for as many as five of the six years through chance alone, assuming no difference between male and female rates, is .109.

force participation (the average monthly number of additions to, and reductions from, the labor force), were 21.9 per cent of the average female labor force and only 5.5 per cent of the average male labor force.[7] Moreover, there is an important sex difference in the proportion of average monthly additions to unemployment that originate in employment in the previous month, as against previous non-labor-force status. In each of the years 1949 through 1952, the proportion of male additions to unemployment originating in a previous status of employment was appreciably greater than that for females (see Table 2). During this period about three-fourths of all male additions to unemployment originated in a previous status of employment and only a fourth from not in the labor force status. In contrast, less than half of the female additions to unemployment originated in previous employment and over half in a previous non-labor-force status.

A "disemployment rate" may be calculated by expressing the additions to unemployment from a previous employment status as a percentage of total employment. Such disemployment rates have been computed, by sex, for the years 1949 to 1952 and are presented in Table 3.

The pattern of disemployment rates differed from that of unemployment rates, by sex. In three of the four years, for which the data have been calculated, female disemployment rates were below those of male and in the fourth year (1951) it was approximately the same. In the two years of relatively high unemployment (1949 and 1950) the female disemployment rate was well below that of the male. As measured by disemployment rates it would seem that women are less vulnerable than men to unemployment.[8] Definitive conclusions, however, must await a longer and more stable series of disemployment rates.

AGE DIFFERENTIALS

Unemployment rates varied considerably by age for each of the sexes throughout the period under observation. Female unemployment rates by age showed less of a tendency to move upward past middle

[7] Philip M. Hauser, "Mobility in Labor Force Participation," E. Wight Bakke, *et al.*, *Labor Mobility and Economic Opportunity*, Technology Press and Wiley, 1954, p. 35.

[8] This conclusion cannot, of course, be interpreted to mean more than that all employed women are less vulnerable to unemployment than all employed men. The observed differences in disemployment rates may arise from differences in industrial and occupational affiliation, age and other variables. To isolate the differentials by sex alone it would be highly desirable to have data available for the calculation of disemployment rates in which industry, occupation, and age structure are controlled. It might also be desirable to control other factors, depending on the purpose of the analysis.

TABLE 3

Employment, Disemployment, and Disemployment Rates by Sex, Twelve-Month Average,[a] 1949-1952
(*numbers in thousands*)

Employment and Disemployment, and Sex	*1949*	*1950*	*1951*	*1952*
Both sexes:				
Employment	58,783	59,811	60,946	61,293
Disemployment[b]	1,096	884	646	650
Disemployment rate[c]	1.9%	1.5%	1.1%	1.1%
Male:				
Employment	41,733	42,222	42,487	42,391
Disemployment[b]	854	663	446	476
Disemployment rate[c]	2.0%	1.6%	1.1%	1.1%
Female:				
Employment	17,050	17,589	18,459	18,902
Disemployment[b]	243	221	200	174
Disemployment rate[c]	1.4%	1.3%	1.1%	0.9%

[a] December-November for employment; January-December for disemployment.
[b] Disemployment figures are the average number of persons unemployed at the end of each monthly period who were employed at the beginning of the monthly period.
[c] Percentage of the total or appropriate part of the civilian labor force disemployed.
Source: Bureau of the Census.

age. Data are presented in Table 4 and Chart 2 showing unemployment rates by age and sex for five selected years, in two of which (1944 and 1953) unemployment reached relatively low levels.

Unemployment rates were relatively high for workers under twenty-five years of age and especially teen-agers. High unemployment rates for these age groups reflect in large measure the relatively high incidence of new entrants to the labor force.[9] Male unemployment rates consistently decreased at the more productive years and tended to increase at later ages beginning with about the age group forty-five years. The upturn in unemployment rates beyond middle age may reflect in part discriminatory practices toward older workers.

Unemployment rates for persons sixty-five years and over are especially difficult to interpret. In 1944 (and also in 1948 and 1951) during a relatively low level of unemployment the unemployment rate for males sixty-five and over was higher than that in the immediately preceding age interval. In 1940 and 1950, when unemployment rates were relatively high (and also in 1937), unemployment rates for males sixty-five and over, were below those of the preceding age group. In

[9] For age differentials in gross changes in labor force participation see *ibid.*, p. 35.

TABLE 4

Unemployment Rates, by Age and Sex, Annual Average, Selected Years, 1940-1953[a]

(*per cent*)

Age and Sex	*1940*	*1944*	*1949*	*1950*	*1953*
Both sexes, 14 and over	14.6	1.2	5.5	5.0	2.4
14 - 19	31.4	3.2	11.6	10.8	6.1
20 - 24	18.8	2.2	8.7	7.2	3.8
25 - 34	11.6	1.0	4.9	4.4	2.0
35 - 44	11.0	0.8	4.0	3.6	1.8
45 - 54	12.9	0.7	3.8	4.0	1.8
55 - 64	14.2	0.8	4.7	4.5	2.2
65 and over	8.8	1.0	4.6	4.3	1.8
Male, 14 and over	14.3	1.0	5.5	4.9	2.3
14 - 19	32.8	3.0	11.9	11.0	6.4
20 - 24	18.1	2.1	9.9	7.7	4.1
25 - 34	10.9	0.7	4.7	4.2	1.8
35 - 44	11.3	0.7	3.8	3.3	1.7
45 - 54	12.4	0.5	3.9	3.9	1.9
55 - 64	14.9	0.8	4.9	4.7	2.3
65 and over	10.0	1.1	4.9	4.6	2.0
Female, 14 and over	15.5	1.7	5.4	5.3	2.6
14 - 19	27.8	3.4	11.2	10.4	5.6
20 - 24	19.9	2.2	6.7	6.3	3.5
25 - 34	13.3	1.5	5.3	5.3	2.6
35 - 44	9.8	1.0	4.2	4.0	1.9
45 - 54	14.6	1.0	3.5	4.2	1.7
55 - 64	10.9	0.8	3.8	3.9	1.8
65 and over	2.1	0.7	3.4	3.4	1.3

[a] For 1944 and 1949, derived from weighted arithmetic means of the twelve monthly estimates. For 1940, estimated from revised 1940 census figures and less detailed age figures for remainder of year.

Source: Bureau of the Census.

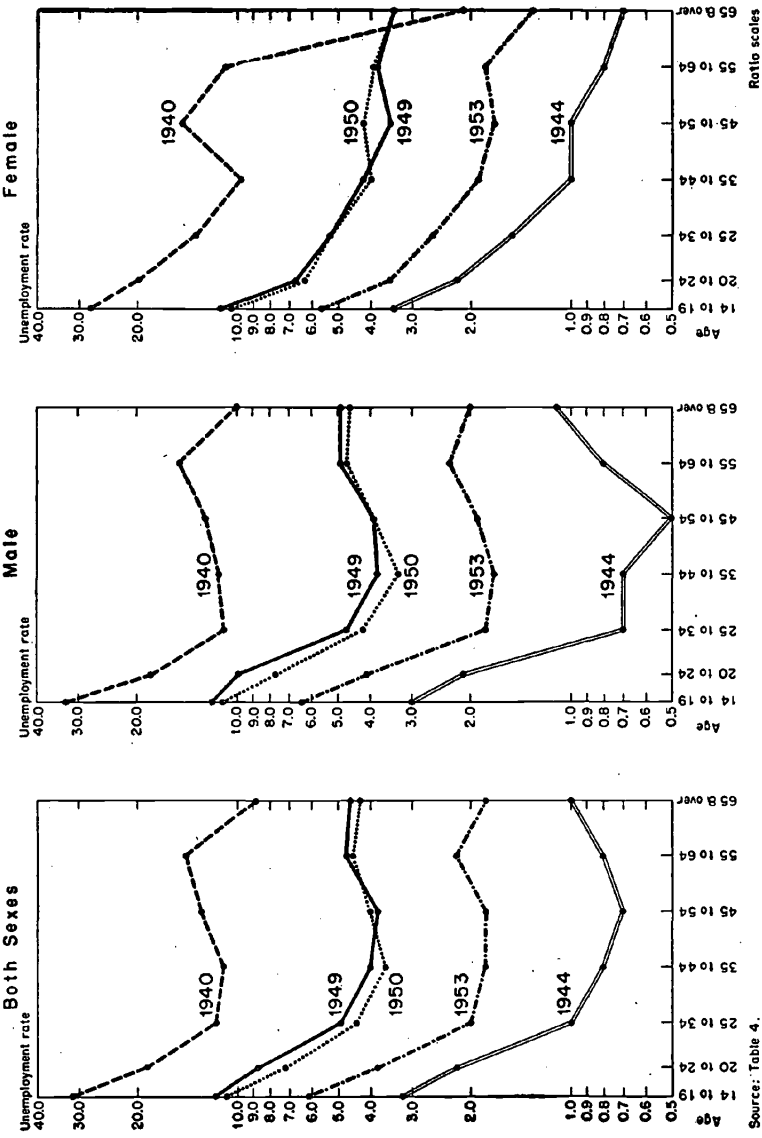
1949, under similar relatively high levels of unemployment, the rate of males sixty-five and over was at the same level as that of the preceding age group.

It may be that the pattern of unemployment by age is more accurately described by the relationships in the years with relatively low levels of unemployment, which show a consistent rise in unemployment rates for persons sixty-five and over. The decrease in unemployment rates for older persons in the years with relatively high levels of unemployment may reflect the failure of the labor force measurement techniques to measure the incidence of unemployment among older workers in recession or depression periods. Under conditions of relatively high unemployment, older workers may tend to be reported as not in the labor force rather than as seeking work.

The apparent consistent difference in the relationship of unemploy-

CHART 2

Unemployment Rates, by Age and Sex, Annual Average, Selected Years, 1940-1953



Source: Table 4.

ment rates for males sixty-five years and older and preceding age groups for years of relatively low and high unemployment, respectively, may tend to bolster this explanation. The pattern is not completely consistent, however. In 1953, a year of relatively low unemployment (total unemployment at level of 2.4 per cent), males sixty-five years and over had a lower unemployment rate than males in the preceding age group.

Unemployment rates for females, as for males, are highest among workers under twenty-five, especially teen-age workers. The rise of the rates for older workers was less marked among females than among males. The interpretation of the unemployment rates for females sixty-five and over are subject to the problems already referred to for males.

The differences in unemployment rates by age cannot be interpreted as indicating differential vulnerability to unemployment of the employed. Unfortunately, because of the unavailability of data disemployment rates cannot be calculated by age.[10]

COLOR DIFFERENTIALS

Because of the small size of the Current Population Survey sample, only limited data are available on a current basis on unemployment by color. Census statistics for 1940 and 1950 indicate that unemployment rates are considerably higher for nonwhite than for white workers. The unemployment rate of nonwhite workers for March 1940 is about 18 per cent; of whites 15 per cent. Unemployment in 1950 for nonwhite workers is 8.5 per cent; of white, 4.6 per cent.

During the war and postwar years this color differential in unemployment persisted (see Table 5). It is significant that nonwhite unemployment was considerably greater than white in periods of both high and low levels of total unemployment.[11] No pattern of change in differential unemployment by color was evident in the available data. However, the small size of the sample makes these relationships rather unstable and difficult to interpret.[12]

[10] Disemployment rates could be estimated from available data but only with considerable labor and relatively great error. It is to be hoped that the Bureau of the Census will be able, in the coming years, to provide "gross change" tabulations by labor force and non-labor-force status classified by age, sex, and color. Sampling errors will, of course, put limitations on cross tabulations but annual averages and a series build up over the years would undoubtedly provide valuable information.

[11] For an analysis of factors accounting for differentials in unemployment by color, see Ralph Turner, "Foci of Discrimination in the Employment of Nonwhite," *American Journal of Sociology*, November 1952, pp. 247-256; "The Relative Position of the Negro Male in the Labor Force of Large American Cities," *American Sociological Review*, August 1951. If nonagricultural workers alone are considered, color differentials are, of course, much more pronounced.

[12] Disemployment rates would be highly desirable in the analysis of color,

TABLE 5

Unemployment Rates, by Color and Sex, April, Selected Years, 1940-1953

(*per cent*)

Color and Sex	*1940*	*1944*	*1949*	*1950*	*1953*
Both sexes:					
White	15.0	1.1	4.7	4.9	2.1
Nonwhite	18.1	1.6	7.6	8.0	4.1
Male:					
White	15.5	n.a.	4.8	4.9	2.0
Nonwhite	19.3	n.a.	7.7	8.4	4.6
Female:					
White	13.5	n.a.	4.3	5.0	2.3
Nonwhite	16.8	n.a.	7.5	7.4	3.3

n.a. = not available.
Source: Bureau of the Census.

MARITAL STATUS DIFFERENTIALS

Statistics are available in the 1940 and 1950 Censuses of Population on unemployment by marital status. While the data for each of these census years relate to periods of relatively high unemployment, the level of unemployment in 1940 was considerably above the 1950 level.

For each sex, in both 1940 and 1950, unemployment rates were lower for married persons with spouses present than for other categories of marital status (see Table 6). Among females, married persons with spouse present also had lower unemployment rates in both 1940 and 1950. Unlike the males, however, white single females had lower unemployment rates than females of other marital status.

The patterns of marital status differentials in unemployment persist when the white and nonwhite populations are considered separately (see Tables 7 and 8). The difference in unemployment rates between married persons with spouse present and persons of other marital status was somewhat less for nonwhite than for white males, however, in both 1940 and 1950. Marital status made the least difference in unemployment rates for white females in 1950 than for any of the other groups studied. It is also worth noting that the marital status differentials in unemployment consistently held for each age group among males but was more erratic by age group among females. Single women of middle age and above tended to have unemployment rates as low as, or lower than, married women with spouse present.

marital status, relationship to head, and other differentials. Unfortunately such data are not yet available.

TABLE 6

Unemployment Rates by Marital Status, Age, and Sex, 1940 and 1950
(*per cent*)

AGE AND SEX	1940			1950		
	Single	*Married, Spouse Present*	*Other Status*	*Single*	*Married, Spouse Present*	*Other Status*
Male, 14 and over	22.3	11.0	19.0	9.7	3.3	9.2
14 - 17	29.2	19.7	19.1	10.5	7.4	4.5
18 - 19	32.8	21.1	31.9	11.6	6.6	17.5
20 - 24	21.9	14.9	22.4	10.3	4.8	13.0
25 - 29	16.5	11.3	18.8	8.8	3.4	11.2
30 - 34	16.6	9.9	18.1	8.0	2.8	9.4
35 - 44	18.4	9.7	19.7	8.1	2.8	9.6
45 - 54	21.6	11.1	20.3	8.7	3.2	9.2
55 - 64	22.5	13.2	21.0	9.6	3.8	9.0
65 - 74	14.6	9.9	12.7	8.3	4.4	6.9
75 and over	8.1	4.3	4.4	5.1	2.8	4.0
Female, 14 and over	16.0	6.8	16.3	5.1	3.6	6.2
14 - 17	38.5	15.1	33.1	12.7	14.9	19.0
18 - 19	31.0	13.9	29.9	7.5	7.2	18.9
20 - 24	16.3	7.4	21.1	5.1	4.6	11.0
25 - 29	9.6	5.8	18.1	4.0	4.1	8.5
30 - 34	7.5	5.3	17.4	3.6	3.7	7.4
35 - 44	7.4	6.5	16.9	3.0	3.1	5.9
45 - 54	7.9	8.0	15.9	2.4	3.0	5.3
55 - 64	8.8	9.5	15.1	2.9	2.9	5.0
65 - 74	6.9	6.8	7.8	3.3	2.9	4.0
75 and over	3.2	3.5	5.1	2.8	2.6	2.9

Source: Bureau of the Census.

DIFFERENTIALS BY RELATIONSHIP TO HEAD

The 1940 and 1950 census materials also permit an analysis of unemployment by relationship to head of household. The unemployment patterns reported above by marital status suggest that the incidence of unemployment is lowest among those with the greatest responsibility. This is indicated by the relatively low unemployment rates of married persons with spouse present, especially among males. This conclusion is bolstered by differential unemployment patterns by relationship to head of household and marital status.

In both 1940 and 1950, male unemployment rates are lower for heads of households than for all other categories of persons (see Table 9). The presence of a spouse made a difference in unemployment rates even for male heads of a household. It would be interesting to ascertain whether this differential is attributable to a difference in the responsibility of the male heads with wife present or reflects rather the economic as well as other powers of the wife. The differential patterns

TABLE 7

Unemployment Rates of the White Labor Force, by Marital Status, Age, and Sex, 1940 and 1950

(*per cent*)

AGE AND SEX	1940			1950		
	Single	*Married, Spouse Present*	*Other Status*	*Single*	*Married, Spouse Present*	*Other Status*
Male, 14 and over	22.3	10.6	18.5	9.4	3.1	8.7
14 - 17	31.8	20.7	18.0	10.6	7.8	4.4
18 - 19	33.4	22.6	32.9	11.2	6.3	17.1
20 - 24	21.7	15.1	21.9	9.9	4.5	12.0
25 - 29	16.2	10.9	18.5	8.4	3.1	10.2
30 - 34	16.1	9.5	17.7	7.6	2.5	8.8
35 - 44	18.0	9.2	19.0	7.9	2.6	9.0
45 - 54	21.4	10.7	19.8	8.5	3.0	9.0
55 - 64	22.6	13.0	20.9	9.5	3.7	8.8
65 - 74	14.5	9.8	12.5	8.3	4.3	6.7
75 and over	7.9	4.1	4.3	5.1	2.8	3.8
Female, 14 and over	15.6	6.4	16.3	4.7	3.2	5.6
14 - 17	42.6	15.4	43.7	12.6	13.9	16.1
18 - 19	31.1	12.9	30.1	6.9	6.6	17.5
20 - 24	15.9	6.6	21.4	4.3	4.0	9.5
25 - 29	9.0	5.2	17.7	3.5	3.5	7.1
30 - 34	6.9	4.9	17.2	3.4	3.3	6.5
35 - 44	6.9	6.2	17.0	2.8	2.7	5.6
45 - 54	7.8	7.9	16.3	2.3	2.8	5.0
55 - 64	8.8	9.7	15.4	3.0	2.8	5.0
65 - 74	7.1	7.5	7.7	3.1	2.3	3.9
75 and over	2.9	3.3	4.9	3.0	2.8	2.8

Source: Bureau of the Census.

of unemployment by relationship to head and marital status tended also to hold for both white and nonwhite populations and for each of the broad age classifications for which the data are available.

Unemployment patterns among women classified by relationship to head of household, differed from those of the men (see Table 10). The lowest unemployment rates, for both 1940 and 1950, were found among wives of heads of households. In contrast with male patterns of unemployment by marital status and relationship to head of household, single females who were head of households had lower unemployment rates than female heads with other marital status—that is, married, widowed, or divorced. Moreover, single female heads had even lower unemployment rates than wives of heads. This relationship held for each age group.

The patterns described tend to hold for the white and nonwhite

TABLE 8

Unemployment Rates of the Nonwhite Labor Force, by Marital Status, Age, and Sex, 1940 and 1950

(*per cent*)

AGE AND SEX	1940			1950		
	Single	*Married, Spouse Present*	*Other Status*	*Single*	*Married, Spouse Present*	*Other Status*
Male, 14 and over	22.6	14.9	21.6	12.1	5.7	11.2
14 - 17	18.3	[a]	[a]	9.5	[b]	[b]
18 - 19	27.3	15.1	28.6	14.1	8.6	18.7
20 - 24	23.6	14.2	23.8	14.1	7.2	15.8
25 - 29	21.0	14.5	19.5	12.5	6.8	13.9
30 - 34	21.1	14.2	20.0	11.2	5.8	11.4
35 - 44	22.2	14.8	22.9	9.9	5.1	11.3
45 - 54	24.5	16.3	23.6	10.5	5.2	10.0
55 - 64	21.4	16.4	22.4	10.3	6.0	10.3
65 - 74	16.3	10.6	14.4	7.0	5.7	8.9
75 and over	[a]	5.9	6.6	[b]	2.7	6.5
Female, 14 and over	19.6	8.8	16.3	10.7	6.6	8.1
14 - 17	21.5	14.8	21.8	13.8	18.7	[b]
18 - 19	29.3	16.6	29.6	15.8	12.0	22.8
20 - 24	21.2	11.1	20.4	12.3	10.1	15.0
25 - 29	15.5	9.0	18.9	8.8	7.8	11.8
30 - 34	14.4	7.7	18.0	6.0	6.5	9.5
35 - 44	13.5	8.0	16.5	6.5	5.7	6.6
45 - 54	11.8	8.5	14.4	5.5	5.0	6.4
55 - 64	9.1	8.3	13.7	4.7	4.6	5.5
65 - 74	2.2	3.9	8.1	6.9	7.8	4.9
75 and over	[a]	[a]	6.2	[b]	[b]	3.3

[a] Base less than 2,000.
[b] Base less than 3,000.
Source: Bureau of the Census.

populations and for each of the broad age groups, for which the data are presented in Tables 9 and 10. Although considerable speculation is possible to account for the patterns reported, the actual explanations must remain a matter for further research.

INDUSTRY DIFFERENTIALS

Data on the industrial affiliation of the unemployed are relatively limited. The 1940 census figures do not provide a good base for the analysis of subsequent changes in unemployment by industry because they provided industrial data for the total unemployed, including emergency workers, and did not show separate statistics for wage or salary workers. Comparable data, however, are available on unemployment rates for wage or salary workers by major industry group

TABLE 9

Male Unemployment Rates, by Relationship to Head of Household, Marital Status, Age, and Color, 1940 and 1950

(*per cent*)

RELATIONSHIP TO HEAD OF HOUSEHOLD, MARITAL STATUS, AND AGE	1940			1950		
	Total	*White*	*Nonwhite*	*Total*	*White*	*Nonwhite*
Total, 14 and over	14.7	14.3	17.9	4.9	4.6	7.9
In household	14.6	14.3	17.8	4.8	4.5	7.6
Head of household	11.1	10.8	14.8	3.3	3.1	5.7
Married, wife present	10.7	10.4	14.3	3.1	2.9	5.2
14 - 24	14.1	14.3	12.2	3.8	3.7	5.9
25 - 44	9.8	9.4	14.1	2.7	2.5	5.1
45 - 64	11.7	11.4	15.9	3.3	3.2	5.3
65 and over	9.1	9.0	9.9	4.1	4.1	5.1
Other	15.6	15.3	17.6	6.6	6.2	8.8
14 - 24	14.9	15.3	13.5	6.9	6.2	10.3
25 - 44	14.5	13.8	17.7	6.3	5.7	8.9
45 - 64	18.2	17.9	20.0	7.0	6.7	8.7
65 and over	9.9	9.7	11.3	6.0	5.8	7.8
Relative of head	23.8	23.8	23.6	10.0	9.7	12.1
Married, wife present	15.6	15.2	18.9	6.7	6.4	8.5
14 - 24	19.3	19.4	18.5	8.9	8.7	9.9
25 - 44	13.6	13.2	17.9	5.8	5.5	8.2
45 - 64	18.7	18.0	27.2	6.4	6.5	6.1
65 and over	16.3	16.0	[a]	7.1	7.1	7.6
Other	25.1	25.2	24.4	10.7	10.4	13.0
14 - 24	28.1	28.6	24.3	11.3	11.0	13.1
25 - 44	19.9	19.5	24.6	9.9	9.6	13.3
45 - 64	23.6	23.4	26.8	10.4	10.4	10.5
65 and over	13.6	13.5	16.2	6.3	6.1	9.0
Not relative of head	15.8	14.4	21.6	7.6	6.8	10.4
Married, wife present	16.2	14.1	20.6	8.1	7.4	9.3
14 - 24	16.2	14.3	20.5	7.2	7.0	7.6
25 - 44	14.4	12.0	18.8	8.3	7.4	9.5
45 - 64	21.0	18.6	29.2	8.2	7.6	9.7
65 and over	20.1	18.8	[a]	8.7	8.1	[b]
Other	15.8	14.5	21.8	7.6	6.7	10.8
14 - 24	12.0	10.7	18.9	7.1	6.1	11.8
25 - 44	14.3	12.5	21.2	7.1	5.9	10.6
45 - 64	21.6	20.9	26.3	8.5	8.0	10.7
65 and over	15.5	15.1	18.4	7.4	7.1	9.3

[a] Base less than 2,000.
[b] Base less than 3,000.
Source: Bureau of the Census.

TABLE 10

Female Unemployment Rates, by Relationship to Head of Household, Marital Status, Age, and Color, 1940 and 1950

(*per cent*)

RELATIONSHIP TO HEAD OF HOUSEHOLD, MARITAL STATUS, AND AGE	1940			1950		
	Total	*White*	*Nonwhite*	*Total*	*White*	*Nonwhite*
Total, 14 and over	13.3	13.1	14.6	4.7	4.2	8.0
In household	13.7	13.5	14.6	4.7	4.2	7.9
Head of household	14.9	14.7	15.7	4.9	4.5	7.1
Single	8.7	7.9	14.5	3.1	2.7	7.7
14 - 24	11.4	9.7	18.5	4.1	2.9	12.9
25 - 44	8.1	7.0	14.8	3.2	2.7	7.3
45 - 64	9.0	8.9	10.6	2.7	2.6	4.9
65 and over	6.3	6.5	[a]	3.6	3.4	[b]
Married, widowed, or divorced	17.3	17.8	15.9	5.5	5.2	7.0
14 - 24	21.1	22.3	19.1	10.4	8.3	16.4
25 - 44	19.0	19.5	17.8	6.3	5.7	7.6
45 - 64	17.0	17.7	14.1	5.1	4.9	6.2
65 and over	7.9	7.9	8.0	4.0	3.9	4.5
Wife of head	6.3	6.0	7.7	3.4	3.1	6.1
14 - 24	6.4	5.9	8.8	4.7	4.3	10.0
25 - 44	5.6	5.2	7.5	3.4	3.0	6.1
45 - 64	8.1	8.2	7.7	2.9	2.7	4.8
65 and over	6.3	7.0	3.4	2.8	2.2	7.2
Other relative of head	19.7	19.6	20.8	6.5	5.9	11.3
Married, husband present	9.4	8.5	14.1	4.8	4.1	9.0
14 - 24	13.1	11.7	19.6	6.1	5.3	11.3
25 - 44	7.2	6.7	10.6	4.0	3.4	7.7
45 - 64	10.1	9.9	11.0	4.0	3.5	7.2
65 and over	[a]	[a]	[a]	5.3	4.3	[b]
Other	20.4	20.3	21.5	6.6	6.1	11.6
14 - 24	27.1	27.2	25.6	8.3	7.6	14.9
25 - 44	11.6	11.2	16.2	5.0	4.4	9.0
45 - 64	13.3	13.2	14.7	4.6	4.4	6.7
65 and over	11.1	11.4	8.6	4.5	4.3	6.5
Not relative of head	7.7	6.2	14.4	4.3	3.4	7.8
Married, husband present	9.7	7.7	12.7	6.9	5.1	9.5
14 - 24	12.1	8.8	16.7	8.2	6.2	12.5
25 - 44	8.6	7.1	10.6	7.0	4.7	9.3
45 - 64	10.9	8.8	17.2	4.7	4.6	4.9
65 and over	[a]	[a]	[a]	[b]	[b]	[b]
Other	7.5	6.1	14.8	4.0	3.3	7.4
14 - 24	6.9	5.4	15.7	4.7	3.3	11.8
25 - 44	7.8	5.7	15.2	4.3	3.4	7.1
45 - 64	8.4	7.8	12.7	3.4	3.2	4.3
65 and over	5.4	5.4	6.1	2.6	2.6	3.2

[a] Base less than 2,000.
[b] Base less than 3,000.
Source: Bureau of the Census.

from 1948 through 1953 (see Table 11).[13] During two of these years, 1949 and 1950, unemployment was relatively high, whereas in the remaining years, 1948, 1951, 1952, and 1953, unemployment rates were relatively low.

In all of the years under observation, unemployment rates for wage or salary workers were above the average in the following industries:

TABLE 11

Unemployment Rates, by Major Industry Group, Annual Average, 1948-1953

(*per cent*)

Major Industry Group[a]	*1948*	*1949*	*1950*	*1951*	*1952*	*1953*
Total wage and salary workers	3.7	6.2	5.5	3.2	2.9	2.6
Agriculture, forestry, and fisheries	4.9	6.5	8.3	4.1	4.1	4.5
Mining	2.3	5.1[b]	6.2	3.3	3.1	3.9
Construction	7.4	11.7	10.7	6.0	5.5	5.7
Manufacturing	3.5	7.2	5.6	3.3	2.8	2.4
Durable goods	3.4	7.5	5.2	2.6	2.4	2.0
Nondurable goods	3.6	6.9	6.0	4.0	3.3	2.8
Transportation, communication, and other public utilities	3.0	5.2	4.1	1.9	1.9	1.7
Wholesale and retail trade	4.3	5.8	5.8	3.7	3.1	3.0
Wholesale trade	3.3	4.8	3.9	2.5	2.4	2.2
Retail trade	4.6	6.0	6.3	4.0	3.4	3.3
Service industries	3.2	5.5	4.5	2.8	2.4	2.1
Finance, insurance, and real estate	1.5	1.8	2.0	1.3	1.5	1.5
Business and repair services	4.1	6.1	5.7	3.2	2.9	2.9
Private households	4.0	6.6	6.4	4.4	3.7	2.9
Personal services except private household	4.6	7.4	7.7	4.6	3.8	3.6
Entertainment and recreation	9.9	10.7	9.9	7.1	6.0	5.3
Professional and related services	1.8	2.5	2.6	1.5	1.3	1.2
Public administration	2.0	2.9	2.8	1.6	1.1	1.2

[a] The industry categories shown for 1950 and prior years are based on the classification system used in the 1940 Census of Population, whereas those for 1951-1953 are based on the classification system used in the 1950 Census of Population, which differs slightly from the 1940 Census of Population.

[b] The month of October has been excluded in computing the rate for this industry; in October, during the work stoppage in the coal mines, a very large proportion of the miners were classified as unemployed because they were reported to be seeking substitute work. If this month were included, the resultant average rate would greatly exaggerate the typical situation during the rest of the year.

Source: Bureau of the Census.

[13] These data are presented to provide a framework for the data which follow on occupation. No special attempt is made to study the incidence of unemployment by industry because other papers in this volume are devoted to this subject, namely those by Kaplan and Levine.

agriculture, forestry, and fisheries; construction; retail trade (except in 1949); domestic service; personal service other than domestic; and amusement and recreation (see Chart 3). In all but one of these years (1948), unemployment rates were above average in nondurable goods manufacturing. If wage and salary workers in government are excluded from consideration, the lowest unemployment rates throughout the period of observation were to be found among wage or salary workers in finance, insurance, and real estate, and in the professional and related service industries.

In the two years of relatively high levels of unemployment, 1949 and 1950, the highest unemployment rates were found in the construction industry. In 1953, during which year the general level of unemployment was relatively low but toward the end of which our current recession developed, the construction industry also had the highest rate of unemployment. The construction industry had the highest rate of unemployment of any of the broad industry groups for the period under observation, 11.7 per cent (experienced in 1949). In three of the four years of relatively low levels of unemployment, the highest unemployment rates were found in entertainment and recreation.

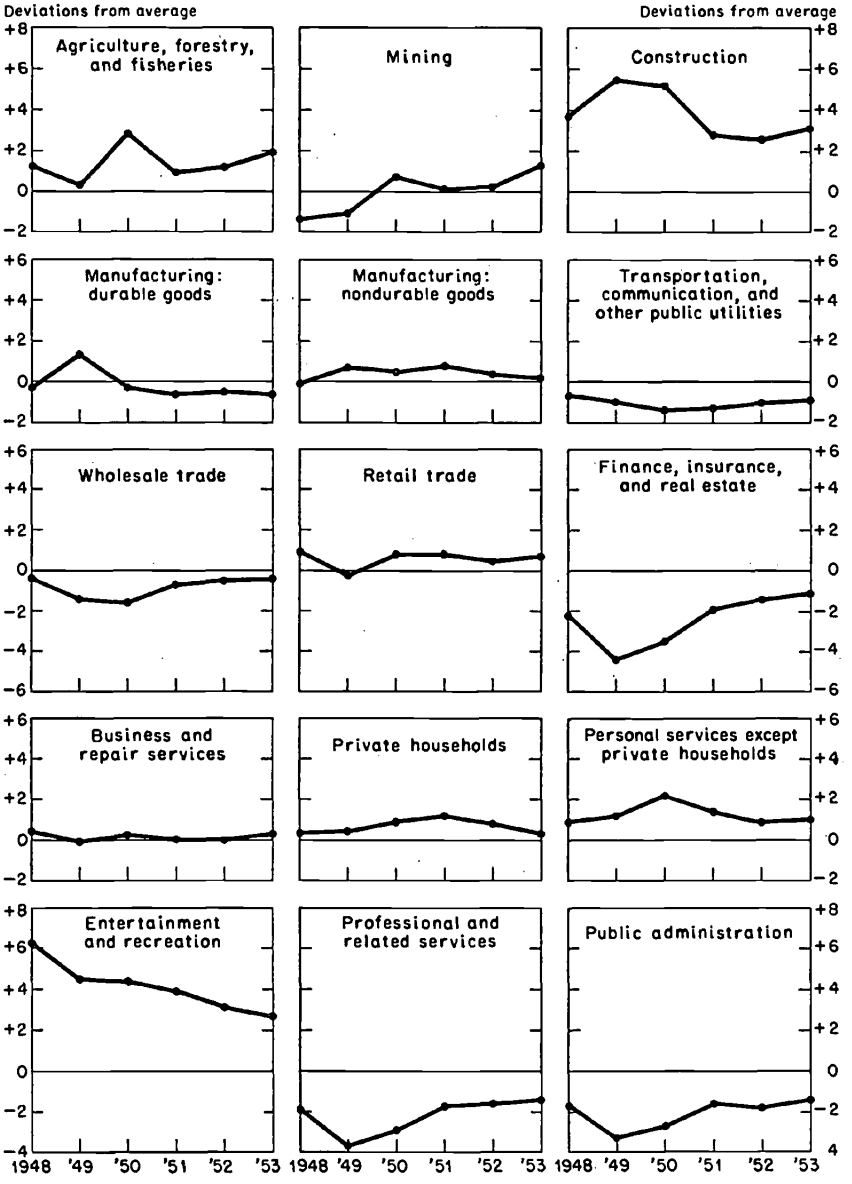
These unemployment rates by industry do not, of course, take into account the unemployment of "new workers." Moreover, since they are available only for very broad groups, with a relatively large sampling error, very few generalizations are justified. An understanding, however, of differential rates of unemployment by industry must be regarded as a prerequisite to an understanding of the differential rates of unemployment among various population groupings. That is, differentials in the incidence of unemployment by age, sex, and color, for example, are undoubtedly in large measure to be accounted for by differentials in industrial employment of these various population groupings. Moreover, within the industrial sectors of the economy, differentials in unemployment by occupation also help to explain the differential impact in unemployment among various population groups.

OCCUPATIONAL DIFFERENTIALS

Data on unemployment rates by occupation are available in comparable form from 1940 through most of the intervening years to date. For comparability with the industrial statistics, statistics are presented for each of the years 1948 through 1953 (see Table 12). Occupational data are also presented for years 1940 and 1944 to provide comparability with statistics on differential unemployment rates by personal characteristics.

CHART 3

Deviations of Major Industry Groups from Average Unemployment Rates, Annual Average, 1948-1953



Source: Derived from Table 11.

TABLE 12

Unemployment Rates by Major Occupation Group and Sex, Selected Years, March 1940 and April 1944-1953

(*per cent*)

Major Occupation Group and Sex[a]	*1940*[b]	*1944*[b]	*1948*	*1949*	*1950*	*1951*	*1952*	*1953*
Both sexes	11.0	1.4	3.4	4.8	5.4	2.7	2.5	2.4
Professional, technical, and kindred workers	5.5[c]	0.7[c]	1.5[c]	1.3[c]	2.2	1.4	0.7	0.8
Farmers and farm managers	3.0	[d]	0.2	0.2	0.3	0.5	0.2	0.1
Managers, officials, and proprietors, except farm	2.7	0.5	0.9	1.4	1.7	0.7	0.4	1.0
Clerical and kindred workers	9.2	1.2	2.3	3.5	3.5	1.9	1.6	1.7
Sales workers	8.9	1.0	3.3	3.4	4.0	2.9	1.7	2.9
Craftsmen, foremen, and kindred workers	15.1	1.6	3.3	5.9	6.9	2.2	2.7	2.7
Operatives and kindred workers	12.9	1.5	5.2	7.5	7.8	4.2	3.9	3.1
Private household workers	10.1	3.4	2.5	4.4	4.7	3.5	3.0	2.4
Service workers, except private household	9.7	2.1	5.3	5.9	7.1	4.6	3.6	3.9
Farm laborers and foremen	12.5	1.4	2.4	3.4	5.4	1.8	3.3	2.3
Laborers, except farm and mine	33.6	2.7	9.0	12.6	14.3	4.8	5.8	5.2
Male	11.7	1.2	3.4	4.9	5.7	2.3	2.3	2.4
Professional, technical, and kindred workers	6.1	0.4	1.2	1.0	2.7	1.3	0.8	0.6
Farmers and farm managers	3.0	[d]	0.2	0.2	0.3	0.5	0.2	0.1
Managers, officials, and proprietors, except farm	2.8	0.4	0.9	1.6	1.9	0.8	0.4	0.9
Clerical and kindred workers	9.5	1.2	2.5	4.5	4.4	2.0	1.3	1.8
Sales workers	8.5	0.4	3.1	3.5	3.5	2.0	1.6	2.4
Craftsmen, foremen, and kindred workers	15.1	1.7	3.4	5.9	7.0	2.1	2.7	2.7
Operatives and kindred workers	12.9	1.4	4.6	6.7	7.1	2.9	3.0	3.0
Private household workers	11.9	4.2	2.2	3.2	12.1	7.5	5.0	7.1
Service workers, except private household	9.2	1.6	5.9	6.1	7.9	4.2	3.6	4.5
Farm laborers and foremen	13.2	1.1	2.8	4.2	6.7	2.1	4.4	2.8
Laborers, except farm and mine	34.0	2.6	9.1	12.4	13.9	4.8	5.7	5.2
Female	8.7	1.8	3.4	4.5	4.6	3.5	2.8	2.4
Professional, technical, and kindred workers	4.8	1.1	1.9	1.6	1.4	1.6	0.6	1.1
Farmers and farm managers	1.4	[d]	[d]	[d]	[d]	[d]	[d]	[d]
Managers, officials, and proprietors, except farm	1.8	0.9	1.3	0.3	0.8	0.2	0.4	1.1
Clerical and kindred workers	9.0	1.2	2.2	2.9	2.8	1.9	1.7	1.6
Sales workers	10.0	1.6	3.5	3.3	4.7	4.5	1.9	3.8
Craftsmen, foremen, and kindred workers	10.7	0.8	[d]	6.8	1.1	2.8	2.4	2.2
Operatives and kindred workers	13.0	1.7	6.8	9.5	9.4	7.0	6.2	3.5
Private household workers	10.0	3.3	2.5	4.5	4.0	3.4	3.0	2.2
Service workers, except private household	9.9	2.7	4.5	5.7	6.2	5.1	3.6	3.2
Farm laborers and foremen	5.8	2.4	1.3	1.2	1.6	1.0	0.3	1.0
Laborers, except farm and mine	19.0	4.1	3.7	19.0	30.6	3.8	8.6	7.0

[a] The occupation categories shown for April 1950 and prior months are based on the classification system used in the 1940 Census of Population, whereas those for April 1951-1953 are based on the classification system used in the 1950 Census of Population, which differs slightly from the 1940 Census of Population.

[b] These figures have not been revised to take account of improved enumeration procedures instituted in July 1945. They are based on the 1940 Census of Population and relate to the occupation of the last full-time job for those looking for work and to the usual occupation for public emergency workers.

[c] Excludes data for semiprofessional workers.

[d] Less than 0.05 per cent.

Source: Bureau of the Census.

In all of the years for which the data are presented, unemployment rates of nonfarm laborers and operatives were above those of the average unemployment of the experienced labor force (see Chart 4). In six of the eight years for which the data are presented, the incidence of unemployment was greater among craftsmen and foremen than for all of the experienced labor force. Only in 1948 and 1951 did the unemployment rate of this group fall below the average. In contrast, all of the categories of nonmanual workers, with the exception of sales workers in 1951 and 1953 had below average unemployment rates for each of the eight years.

The highest unemployment rates, by far, for each of the years except 1944, the wartime low in unemployment, were found among nonfarm laborers. In 1940, 1 in 3 laborers was unemployed as contrasted with 1 in 9 for all experienced workers; and in 1949 and 1950 about 1 in 8 laborers was unemployed as contrasted with 1 in 20 for all workers.

In general, the pattern described held for both men and women, with the exception that female service workers not in domestic service had higher than average unemployment rates for each of the years studied, and male sales workers had below average unemployment rates for seven of the eight years and just average rates for one of them (1953).

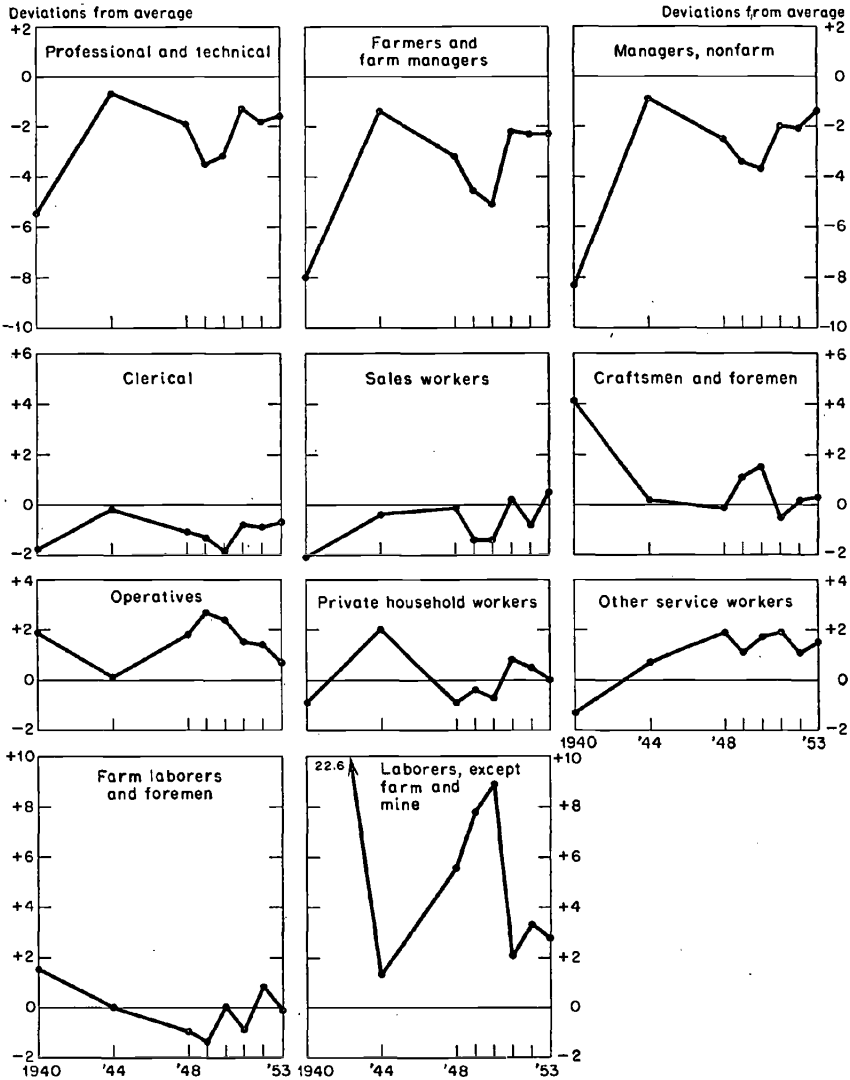
Sex differences in unemployment rates for each occupation provide interesting patterns, but they cannot be interpreted as indicating differential vulnerability to disemployment. Considering only those occupational groups in which appreciable concentrations of women appear, unemployment rates tend to be higher for female than male sales workers, and operatives and kindred workers; and lower for female than male workers among clerical and kindred workers and private household workers. No consistent pattern of sex differential unemployment rates obtained during the period studied for professional and technical and kindred workers, or service workers except in private households.

3. *Composition of the Unemployed*

Despite the relative stability of patterns of unemployment during the period studied, the actual composition of the unemployed varied considerably. This, of course, was the result of the great changes in the labor force participation rates of various population groups under the impact of World War II and its aftermath. Moreover, the changing pattern of industrial and occupational activity during this period also contributed to variations in the composition of the unemployed. To show extreme changes in the characteristics of unemployed workers

CHART 4

Deviations of Major Occupation Groups from Average Unemployment Rates, Selected Years, 1940-1953



Source: Derived from Table 12.

as a group, data will be presented as far as possible for the selected years 1940, 1944, 1949, 1950, and 1953.

SEX COMPOSITION

The composition of the unemployed by sex changed greatly between 1940 and 1953 (see Table 13). In 1940, only 21.7 per cent of the un-

TABLE 13

Percentage Distribution of Unemployed, by Age and Sex, Selected Years, March 1940 and April 1944-1953

Age and Sex	*1940*	*1944*	*1949*	*1950*	*1953*
Both sexes, 14 and over	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
14 - 19	15.1	27.0	15.0	12.7	15.3
20 - 24	19.4	17.4	18.3	16.4	14.6
25 - 44	37.8	30.2	38.5	38.3	38.9
45 - 64	24.0	19.1	23.5	28.5	26.5
65 and over	2.4	6.4	4.6	4.1	4.7
Male, 14 and over	77.0	57.2	73.0	74.8	69.8
14 - 19	10.6	14.3	9.8	9.2	9.1
20 - 24	13.5	7.9	13.6	11.9	10.0
25 - 44	29.4	14.3	26.6	27.7	26.9
45 - 64	21.2	15.9	18.7	22.5	20.1
65 and over	2.3	4.8	4.3	3.5	3.7
Female, 14 and over	21.7	42.9	26.9	25.2	30.2
14 - 19	4.5	12.7	5.2	3.5	6.2
20 - 24	5.9	9.5	4.7	4.5	4.6
25 - 44	8.4	15.9	11.9	10.6	12.0
45 - 64	2.8	3.2	4.8	6.0	6.4
65 and over	0.1	1.6	0.3	0.6	1.0

Note: Details may not add up to totals because of rounding.
Source: Bureau of the Census.

employed were women. In 1944, in contrast, reflecting the relatively large increase in the female, and decrease in the male, civilian labor force, 42.9 per cent of the unemployed were female. Changes in the sex composition of the unemployed during the period under observation depended more on changes in the composition of the total labor force, as affected by war and postwar conditions, than on changes in sex differentials in the incidence of unemployment. At the time of the 1940 census, there was only about one woman for each three men among the jobless. With the great increase in the number of women in the labor force since the war, and the decrease of male workers in the civilian labor force, the number of female unemployed came close to equaling the number of male unemployed. With demobilization and the restoration of the more nearly normal sex ratio in the labor force, the proportion of females among the unemployed greatly decreased.

A similar cycle, but of lesser magnitude, was observable in the increase in the proportion of women in the civilian labor force with the partial remobilization incident to the Korean episode.

AGE COMPOSITION

In 1940, 15.1 per cent of the unemployed were under twenty years of age (see Table 13). By 1944, the lowest point in unemployment during the period observed, 27 per cent of the unemployed were under twenty. This great increase was, of course, not attributable to the great increase in the unemployment rate of younger workers. It resulted rather from the great increase in the labor force participation rates of younger workers and their relatively greater importance in the total civilian labor force, on the one hand, and the relatively great decline in the unemployment rates of other workers, especially of the middle aged. By 1949, a year of relatively high unemployment, persons under twenty again made up 15.0 per cent of the jobless, and the rate was close to this figure in 1950 and 1953.

At the other extreme of the age scale, persons sixty-five years old and over, constituted 2.4 per cent of the jobless in 1940. By 1944, this proportion had almost tripled, reaching a level of 6.4 per cent. During the intervening period, however, as in the case of workers under twenty and all workers, unemployment rates of the older workers greatly declined. The increase of the proportion of the jobless who were older persons is attributable mainly to the increased labor force participation rates of older persons in the wartime civilian labor force, but also to the relatively great decline in the unemployment rates of persons of middle age.

Whereas the proportion of persons under twenty among the unemployed almost doubled and those sixty-five and over almost tripled in 1944, the proportion of the jobless who were between twenty and sixty-four years of age changed relatively little. Under peak war conditions, persons in these classes made up a smaller proportion of the unemployed in 1944 than in 1940, reflecting, of course, the greater participation of workers at the younger and older ends of the age scale.

The proportion of the jobless who were twenty to twenty-four years of age increased slightly in 1949 but decreased again in 1950 and 1953. The decrease was in large measure attributable to the decreased labor force participation rate of persons of this age resulting from the school attendance of demobilized GI's in the postwar years and from the increased preoccupation of women of this age group with marriage and reproduction.

It is evident that changes in the age composition of the unemployed,

as well as changes in sex composition, cannot be interpreted as reflecting changes in unemployment rates. The changes are more the result of the important modifications in the composition of the total civilian labor force we have experienced under the impact of the war and postwar conditions.

COLOR COMPOSITION

Despite the fact that the differences in unemployment rates of white and nonwhite workers (see Table 14) must be cautiously interpreted,

TABLE 14

Percentage Distribution of Unemployed, by Color, Selected Years, March 1940 and April 1944-1953

Color	*1940*[a]	*1944*	*1949*	*1950*	*1953*
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
White	88.1	82.7	84.9	84.4	79.1
Nonwhite	11.9	17.3	15.1	15.6	20.9

[a] Revised 1940 Census of Population data pertaining to week of March 24-30.
Source: Bureau of the Census.

particularly in the light of sampling error, it would seem that during the period under observation the net effect of shifts in the composition of the labor force and changing volumes of unemployment was a decrease in the proportion of the unemployed who were nonwhite in periods of high unemployment and an increase during periods of relatively low unemployment. It is possible that during periods of full employment, the white population is more successful than the nonwhite in reducing unemployment to minimal frictional levels. Another possible explanation for this phenomenon may be that during periods of full employment, mobility in labor force participation may be greater for nonwhite than white workers and may be reflected in relatively higher unemployment rates.

MARITAL COMPOSITION

Data on the marital composition of the unemployed, as in the case of unemployment rates, are available only for 1940 and 1950 (see Table 15). These data, in conjunction with the unemployment rates shown in Table 6 above, support two general conclusions: (1) In spite of the relatively low unemployment rates of married men with spouse present, they comprised one-half of all unemployed men in both years, because of their great preponderance in the labor force. (2) The fact that unemployment rates of single men decreased slightly more from 1940 to 1950 than those of men of "other" marital status probably accounts

for part of the decrease in the proportion of the unemployed who were single. Specifically, the unemployment rate for single men was 2.3 times greater in 1940 than in 1950, while that for men of "other" marital status was 2.1 times greater.

Differences in the marital composition of unemployed women for 1940 and 1950 were much more marked. Single women constituted

TABLE 15

Percentage Distribution of Unemployed, by Marital Status and Sex, 1940 and 1950

Marital Status and Sex	*1940*	*1950*
Male, 14 and over	100.0	100.0
Single	41.8	37.1
Married, spouse present	49.2	49.6
Other status	9.0	13.3
Female, 14 and over	100.0	100.0
Single	58.9	35.5
Married, spouse present	15.4	35.9
Other status	25.6	28.7

Note: Details may not add up to totals because of rounding.
Source: Bureau of the Census.

almost 60 per cent of the unemployed in 1940, but only 36 per cent in 1950. The more than doubling of the relative importance of married women with spouse present among the unemployed reflects their increasing importance in the female labor force and also the sharper decrease in unemployment rates of single than married women. In 1940, the rate for single women was over three times as high as in 1950 while that for married women living with their spouses was only about twice as high.

COMPOSITION BY RELATIONSHIP TO HEAD

The composition of the unemployed according to their relationship to the head of the household also can be studied only for 1940 and 1950. On both dates, slightly more than one-half of the unemployed men were heads of households, and most of these unemployed heads had their wives living with them (see Table 16). The most striking fact about the distributions of unemployed men is their almost identical composition by relationship to head, marital status, and age in the two years studied. This is true for both whites and nonwhites.

The situation was quite different among women, however. A much lower proportion of unemployed women were heads of households (19 per cent in both years, see Table 17), and a much higher propor-

TABLE 16

Percentage Distribution of Unemployed Males, by Relationship to Head of Household, Marital Status, Age, and Color, 1940 and 1950

RELATIONSHIP TO HEAD OF HOUSEHOLD, MARITAL STATUS, AND AGE	1940			1950		
	Total	*White*	*Nonwhite*	*Total*	*White*	*Nonwhite*
Total, 14 and over in households	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Head of household	52.3	52.3	52.1	53.3	53.9	49.8
Married, wife present	45.8	46.1	43.3	45.9	46.9	40.5
14 - 24	2.8	2.8	2.7	3.1	3.1	2.7
25 - 44	21.9	21.8	23.4	21.0	20.9	21.3
45 - 64	19.0	19.5	15.6	18.3	19.0	14.3
65 and over	2.1	2.1	1.6	3.6	3.8	2.2
Other	6.4	6.1	8.8	7.4	7.0	9.3
14 - 24	0.3	0.3	0.5	0.4	0.3	0.7
25 - 44	2.0	1.8	3.7	2.3	2.0	3.7
45 - 64	3.5	3.5	3.9	3.6	3.6	3.9
65 and over	0.6	0.6	0.6	1.1	1.1	1.0
Relative of head	41.2	42.3	33.1	40.8	41.3	37.4
Married, wife present	3.8	3.7	4.1	5.0	4.9	5.5
14 - 24	1.1	1.0	1.3	1.7	1.6	2.0
25 - 44	2.1	2.0	2.2	2.6	2.5	3.0
45 - 64	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.6	0.6	0.4
65 and over	0.1	0.1	[a]	0.1	0.1	0.1
Other	37.4	38.6	29.0	35.8	36.5	31.9
14 - 24	25.9	26.6	20.6	22.9	23.1	21.4
25 - 44	9.4	9.7	7.1	10.0	10.2	8.8
45 - 64	1.9	2.0	1.2	2.6	2.8	1.4
65 and over	0.2	0.2	0.1	0.4	0.4	0.2
Not related to head	6.5	5.5	14.8	6.0	4.8	12.8
Married, wife present	0.8	0.6	2.9	0.9	0.6	2.7
14 - 24	0.1	0.1	0.4	0.1	0.1	0.4
25 - 44	0.5	0.3	1.9	0.5	0.3	1.8
45 - 64	0.2	0.2	0.6	0.2	0.2	0.5
65 and over	[a]	[a]	[a]	[a]	[a]	[a]
Other	5.7	4.9	12.0	5.0	4.2	10.0
14 - 24	1.0	0.9	2.2	1.0	0.8	1.8
25 - 44	2.4	1.9	6.4	1.9	1.4	4.9
45 - 64	2.1	2.0	3.2	1.8	1.6	3.0
65 and over	0.2	0.2	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.4

[a] Less than 0.05 per cent.
Note: Details may not add up to totals because of rounding.
Source: Bureau of the Census.

TABLE 17

Percentage Distribution of Unemployed Females, by Relationship to Head of Household, Marital Status, Age, and Color, 1940 and 1950

RELATIONSHIP TO HEAD OF HOUSEHOLD, MARITAL STATUS, AND AGE	1940			1950		
	Total	*White*	*Nonwhite*	*Total*	*White*	*Nonwhite*
Total, 14 and over in households	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Head of household	18.6	17.2	26.2	18.5	17.8	21.0
Single	3.0	2.9	3.6	3.1	3.2	2.7
14 - 24	0.4	0.3	0.8	0.4	0.3	0.7
25 - 44	1.4	1.2	2.3	1.3	1.2	1.5
45 - 64	1.1	1.2	0.5	1.1	1.3	0.4
65 and over	0.1	0.1	[a]	0.2	0.3	0.1
Married, widowed, or divorced	15.6	14.3	22.6	15.4	14.6	18.3
14 - 24	0.4	0.3	0.8	0.5	0.4	1.0
25 - 44	7.5	6.4	13.4	6.3	5.4	9.6
45 - 64	7.2	7.1	7.7	7.6	7.8	7.0
65 and over	0.5	0.4	0.6	1.0	1.0	0.7
Wife of head	12.1	11.5	15.3	32.2	32.8	29.7
14 - 24	1.5	1.3	2.3	5.5	5.8	4.4
25 - 44	7.0	6.5	9.7	18.7	18.5	19.2
45 - 64	3.5	3.5	3.2	7.6	8.2	5.7
65 and over	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.3	0.3	0.5
Other relative of head	61.5	65.3	41.0	42.9	44.3	37.9
14 - 24	45.2	48.4	27.9	27.2	28.2	23.4
25 - 44	12.9	13.3	10.9	11.6	11.5	11.7
45 - 64	3.2	3.4	2.1	3.7	4.0	2.5
65 and over	0.2	0.3	0.1	0.5	0.5	0.3
Not relative of head	7.8	6.0	17.5	6.5	5.1	11.3
Married, husband present	0.7	0.4	2.5	1.0	0.6	2.6
14 - 24	0.2	0.1	0.9	0.3	0.2	0.7
25 - 44	0.4	0.2	1.4	0.6	0.3	1.7
45 - 64	0.1	0.1	0.3	0.1	0.1	0.2
65 and over	[a]	[a]	[a]	[a]	[a]	[a]
Other	7.0	5.6	15.0	5.5	4.6	8.7
14 - 24	2.0	1.6	4.3	1.6	1.2	2.9
25 - 44	3.2	2.2	8.6	2.3	1.7	4.6
45 - 64	1.6	1.6	2.0	1.3	1.4	1.1
65 and over	0.2	0.2	0.1	0.2	0.3	0.1

[a] Less than 0.05 per cent.

Note: Details may not add up to totals because of rounding.

Source: Bureau of the Census.

tion were relatives of heads. Moreover, there was an important change in the composition of unemployed women *within* the group who were relatives of heads—in 1940, only 12 per cent of all unemployed women were wives of heads while in 1950 almost one-third were. This, too, is a reflection of the increased participation of wives of household heads in the female labor force, since the relative drop in unemployment rates from 1940 to 1950 was about the same for wives and other relatives of heads.

Roughly the same patterns of change in composition obtained among white and nonwhite women. However, in the case of the nonwhites, the marked increase in the proportion of wives of heads were offset by somewhat less marked decreases in two groups—other relatives of heads and women not related to the head of the household in which they lived.

INDUSTRY COMPOSITION

The industry composition of unemployed wage and salary workers who had previous employment is shown for April 1948 to April 1953 in Table 18. (The high over-all unemployment rates during this period were in 1949 and 1950—5.5 and 5.0 per cent, respectively—with rates between 2.4 and 3.4 for the other years [see Table 1].) No marked shifts in industry composition of the unemployed are evident for these years, especially if the range of sampling error of the Current Population Survey is taken into account. Manufacturing workers comprised roughly one-third of the unemployed throughout most of the period, workers in wholesale and retail trade accounted for about another fifth, service workers for about one-sixth of the unemployed, and construction workers for 11 to 16 per cent. The most significant characteristic of the unemployment rates (Table 11) and the industry composition of the unemployed (Table 19) is the stability of the ranks of the various industry groups with respect to both.

OCCUPATION COMPOSITION

The composition of unemployed persons by occupation of previous employment is available for March 1940 and 1944 as well as for April 1948 to April 1953. (As has been mentioned before, 1940 had the highest unemployment rate of the period under study, 14.6 per cent, and 1944 the lowest, 1.2 per cent.) The percentage of unemployed new workers—that is, persons who had never had full-time jobs—was greater in these two years than in any of the others (see Table 19). In 1940, this probably reflects the entry of more secondary family workers, without previous work experience, into the labor force in

TABLE 18

Percentage Distribution of Unemployed Wage and Salary Workers, by Major Industry Group, April 1948-1953

Major Industry Group[a]	*1948*	*1949*	*1950*	*1951*	*1952*	*1953*
Total wage and salary workers	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Agriculture, forestry, and fisheries	3.8	3.8	5.0	3.3	4.9	4.0
Mining	0.5	1.3	1.7	2.9	1.2	4.0
Construction	13.5	12.6	13.4	11.1	16.4	15.4
Manufacturing	35.0	38.8	35.6	33.5	35.6	27.0
Durable goods	17.2	20.5	18.5	14.1	18.8	13.2
Nondurable goods	17.8	18.4	17.1	19.3	16.8	13.8
Transportation, communication, and other public utilities	9.6	9.9	6.9	5.5	5.5	5.3
Wholesale and retail trade	20.8	17.4	19.6	22.0	18.9	26.6
Wholesale trade	2.9	2.8	2.8	3.9	2.4	3.8
Retail trade	17.8	14.6	16.8	18.1	16.5	22.8
Service industries	13.8	14.2	14.9	20.0	15.4	16.1
Finance, insurance, and real estate	1.2	1.5	0.8	1.2	2.2	2.6
Business and repair services	2.6	2.1	1.8	1.3	1.6	1.8
Private households	2.4	3.5	3.4	5.6	4.6	4.3
Personal services, except private household	3.1	3.2	3.8	4.4	2.6	2.2
Entertainment and recreation	2.0	1.5	1.7	2.4	1.5	1.8
Professional and related services	2.6	2.5	3.5	5.1	3.0	3.3
Public administration	3.0	2.2	3.1	1.8	2.0	1.5

[a] The industry categories shown for April 1950 and prior months are based on the classification system used in the 1940 Census of Population, whereas those for April 1951-1953 are based on the classification system used in the 1950 Census of Population, which differs slightly from the 1940 Census of Population.

Note: Details may not add up to totals because of rounding.

Source: Bureau of the Census.

periods of high unemployment, in an attempt to supplement the family income. Similarly, the relatively high percentage in the middle of the war when unemployment rates were lowest, also reflects the recruitment of secondary workers to the labor force in the national emergency. These were, in the main, inexperienced very young workers and married women.

In 1940, when one-third of the laborers, except farm and mine, were unemployed (see Table 12), they constituted almost one-fourth of the unemployed (see Table 20). On the other hand, in 1944 when less than 3 per cent of this occupational group were unemployed they constituted less than 10 per cent of the unemployed. This is clear evidence that these laborers tended to constitute a lower proportion of the total unemployed as the volume of unemployment decreased. No

TABLE 19

Percentage Distribution of Unemployed, by Major Occupation Group, Selected Years, March 1940 and April 1944-1953

Major Occupation Group[a]	*1940*[b]	*1944*[b]	*1948*	*1949*	*1950*	*1951*	*1952*	*1953*
Total unemployed	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Professional, technical, and kindred workers	3.2	3.2	2.8	1.7	2.8	3.8	2.2	2.7
Farmers and farm managers	2.4	0.3	0.5	0.3	0.4	1.1	0.5	0.1
Managers, officials, and proprietors, except farm	1.6	2.6	2.7	2.9	3.2	2.5	1.5	3.8
Clerical and kindred workers	7.1	11.0	7.9	9.0	7.8	8.5	7.9	8.3
Sales workers	4.3	3.6	5.6	4.3	4.6	6.2	4.0	7.1
Craftsmen, foremen, and kindred workers	13.6	15.5	12.6	16.1	15.7	10.7	15.3	15.4
Operatives and kindred workers	18.6	23.7	30.9	31.1	28.6	31.2	30.9	26.2
Private household workers	3.6	7.7	2.1	2.8	2.7	4.0	3.5	2.9
Service workers, except private household	5.6	10.4	10.8	8.5	10.4	12.6	10.8	13.3
Farm laborers and foremen	6.7	5.0	2.9	3.2	3.9	2.5	4.5	3.2
Laborers, except farm and mine	23.4	9.4	14.8	15.9	15.0	11.1	13.6	12.9
Never had a full-time job	10.1	7.9	6.5	4.0	5.0	5.9	5.3	4.2

[a] The occupation categories shown for April 1950 and prior months are based on the classification system used in the 1940 Census of Population, whereas those for April 1951-1953 are based on the classification system used in the 1950 Census of Population, which differs slightly from the 1940 Census of Population.

[b] These figures have not been revised to take account of improved enumeration procedures instituted in July 1945. They are based on the 1940 Census of Population and relate to the occupation of the last full-time job for those looking for work and to the usual occupation for public emergency workers.

Note: Details may not add up to totals because of rounding.

Source: Bureau of the Census.

such tendency is evident in the other occupational groups. In fact, except for operatives and kindred workers, who became a larger proportion of the unemployed during the period studied, no pattern is evident in the variations in the occupational composition of the unemployed. With the exceptions noted, most of the fluctuations are minor, especially if account is taken of the sampling errors involved.

4. Summary and Conclusion

UNEMPLOYMENT RATES

With few exceptions, analysis of the differentials in unemployment rates from 1940 to 1954 revealed surprisingly stable patterns in the incidence of unemployment. Through varying levels of economic activity and total unemployment, the unemployment rates of women seemed to be consistently above those of men; those of young persons under twenty-five were consistently above those of older persons. Unemployment rates, especially for men, consistently decreased for

persons up to forty-five years of age, then increased, although the rates of persons sixty-five years of age and over were erratic—perhaps partly as a result of problems of conceptual framework and measurement of the labor force.

The unemployment rates of nonwhite persons throughout the period of observation were higher than those of white. For both the census years 1940 and 1950, the unemployment rates of single persons and persons widowed, divorced, or married without spouse present, were consistently above those of married persons with spouse present. Moreover, in both years, the unemployment rates of male members of households other than heads were well above those of male household heads, and the unemployment rates of male heads who did not have a wife present were higher than those who did.

In both 1940 and 1950, the unemployment rates of female members of households other than wives of heads were higher than those of wives of heads, and the unemployment rates of female heads—widowed, married, or divorced—were higher than those of single female heads.

Throughout the period 1948 to 1953, unemployment rates of wage or salary workers were above the average in agriculture, forestry, and fisheries; construction; retail trade; domestic service; personal service other than domestic; amusement and recreation; and, in all but one year, in the nondurable goods manufacturing industries. Excluding government workers, unemployment rates were lowest for workers in finance, insurance and real estate, and in the professional and related services. Similarly, throughout this period and back to 1940, unemployment rates were higher than the average for the experienced labor force for nonfarm laborers and operatives, and, except for one of the seven years analyzed, for craftsmen and foremen. White collar workers tended to have below average rates.

Despite the relative stability in patterns of differential unemployment rates during the period studied, the actual composition of the jobless varied appreciably as the result of the great changes in the labor force participation rates of various population groups and the changing pattern of industrial occupational activity under the conditions of World War II and its aftermath. With the great increase in the number of women in the civilian labor force during the war and the decrease of male workers, the number of female unemployed almost equaled the male. Demobilization and contraction of the total labor force led to a decline in the proportion of females among the unemployed. But when the proportion of women in the civilian labor force increased at the time of the Korean War, their proportion of the unemployed again increased.

During the war years, great changes occurred in the age composition of the jobless, especially at the extremes of the age distribution. The increased labor force participation rates of persons under twenty and persons sixty-five years of age and over during the peak of the war effort, together with the relatively great decrease in the incidence of unemployment among the age groups between these extremes, resulted in considerable increases in the proportions of the total unemployed who were under 20 or 65 and over. Persons 20 to 24 years of age decreased as a proportion of the total jobless as the result of the transfer of males of this age from the civilian labor force to the military establishment during the war, their return to school as demobilized GI's after the war, and the withdrawal of young women from the labor force after the war as the result of the postwar rise in marriage and fertility rates.

COMPOSITION OF THE UNEMPLOYED

The data indicate that the nonwhite population contributed larger proportions of the unemployed during periods of relatively low unemployment and smaller proportions during periods of relatively high unemployment. This phenomenon may be attributable to the greater success of the white population in reducing unemployment to minimal levels under full-employment conditions or to a possibly greater nonwhite mobility in labor force participation during periods of unemployment.

Despite the relatively low unemployment rates of men with wives present, they constituted about half of the unemployed in 1940 and in 1950, reflecting their numerical domination of the labor force. The proportion of the male jobless who were single decreased slightly between 1940 and 1950. But the proportion of unemployed women who were living with their husbands more than doubled, while that of single women increased markedly. In consequence, the proportions of married and single women among the unemployed were roughly equal in 1950, while in 1940 the proportion of single women among the jobless was almost four times larger. These shifts reflect both the increased participation of married women in the labor force and the increase in the proportion of women married.

Very little difference occurred in the composition of unemployed males by relationship to head, marital status, and age between 1940 and 1950. On both dates, more than half were heads of households, generally with a wife present. A much larger proportion of the unemployed women than of the men were relatives of heads of households—about three-fourths in both years—and less than one-fifth were

heads themselves. The proportion who were wives of heads was almost three times as great in 1950 as in 1940—another reflection of the changing role of the married women in the labor force.

Throughout the period studied, workers in manufacturing made up roughly one-third of the unemployed wage and salary workers, workers in wholesale and retail trade about one-fifth, workers in service industries about one-sixth, and construction workers 11 to 16 per cent. The proportion of the unemployed who were laborers (about one-fourth in 1940) decreased as the volume of unemployment decreased. The proportion of operatives and kindred workers (from one-fourth to one-third after 1940) increased during the period under observation. No pattern was evident in the variation in the proportions of other occupational groups during the period studied. Craftsmen, foremen, and kindred workers accounted for from 13 to 16 per cent of the unemployed, and service workers, from about 9 to 13 per cent after 1940.

Curiously enough, the proportion of the unemployed who were new workers (no previous full-time job) was greatest in the period of the highest unemployment (1940) and of the lowest (1944), about 10 and about 8 per cent respectively. In subsequent years they constituted from about 4 to 6 per cent. Their relatively high proportion in 1940 and 1944 reflects the influx of secondary workers to the labor force under conditions of relatively high unemployment or of national emergency in war.

CONCLUSION

The observed patterns of differential unemployment rates cannot be interpreted to indicate the differential vulnerability of employed workers to unemployment. The rates include both the unemployment resulting from disemployment (from employment to unemployment) and that resulting from a change in status from "not in the labor force" to unemployment. Unemployment rates, therefore, reflect differential patterns of labor force participation as well as differential vulnerabilities to disemployment.

The gross change statistics tabulated by the Bureau of the Census permit the separation of these two components by sex. The higher unemployment rates of women were attributable primarily to their greater movement into and out of the labor force rather than to their greater vulnerability to disemployment.

Similarly, differentials in gross changes in labor force participation may account for considerable portions of the other differentials in unemployment rates which have been observed. It would be highly desirable to have gross change data that would permit the calculation

of disemployment rates for as many characteristics and as much cross tabulation, as possible. Without question, the analysis of differential disemployment rates will continue to be an important objective in further research on unemployment. It is likely that there will be considerable interest, as well, in the analysis of differentials and changes in the incidence of the portion of unemployment that originates in non-labor-force status[14] and in the status that follows reduction in unemployment.[15]

One hopes that the Bureau of the Census will be able to provide more detailed tabulations of gross changes at least on an annual basis. The small size of the sample of the Current Population Survey sets definite limits to the gross change tabulations possible. However, even if only annual tabulations were made, or two or more years' statistics were pooled to stabilize the data, highly significant knowledge could be gained about unemployment. Particularly important would be the continuation of such a series of data so that the analysis of disemployment rates could be made over a considerable period of time.

COMMENT

ELI GINZBERG, Columbia University

In meeting my assignment to discuss the paper by Phillip M. Hauser, I have taken the liberty of a loose interpretation. After commenting briefly on selected aspects, I shall comment more fully on the theme of the session and its relation to the conference as a whole.

As far as Hauser's paper is concerned, I find his concept of "disemployment" suggestive. I am not enough of a technician to know about the feasibility of collecting data that would permit one to relate a person's presently unemployed status to his previous position in the labor force. However, I am sure that from a policy point of view it is very important to know whether a currently unemployed person has been regularly attached to the labor force with a long record of steady employment, or whether he represents a new entrant, or one of the

[14] For example, between 1949 and 1952, between 21 and 29 per cent of the male additions to unemployment originated in the non-labor-force status. Among females during the same period about 53 to 57 per cent of the additions to unemployment had similar origin. Most of the males who entered unemployment from the non-labor-force status were in the category "other"; most of the females by far had been housewives. Each of the sexes contributed about the same proportion of additions to unemployment from the previous status of "in school."

[15] For example, between 1949 and 1952, about three-fourths to four-fifths of the male reductions in unemployment were accounted for by employment and most of the remaining reductions by "other" in the non-labor-force status. Among females about half of the reductions in unemployment were accounted for by employment and most of the remaining reductions by "keeping house."

many who flow in and out of the labor market in response to changes in personal and economic conditions.

Hauser's paper has also placed before us a rich body of statistical information that highlights differential unemployment according to such important characteristics as sex, age, color, marital status, and other socio-economic factors. I was particularly struck by the much higher rates of unemployment of persons who are single or in "other status" in contrast to the rates for married persons.

Now, a few general comments about the way in which this conference has approached the task of dealing with the meaurement and behavior of unemployment. My point of view, which less flatteringly could be called my prejudices, grows out of my earlier studies of unemployment.[1] It is also influenced by my current consulting work for the Secretary of Labor, which has afforded me an opportunity to see some of these problems from the vantage point of administration.

Although one-half of the conference's title deals with the behavior of unemployment, I have been impressed with the failure of the participants to recognize the importance of studying the behavior of the unemployed, which is surely the key to the study of the behavior of unemployment. Admittedly such studies are not easy to plan and carry through, and they require skills that go beyond the typical training of economists or statisticians. It is inevitable that individuals will approach research problems in terms of the theories and techniques that they control. In the present instance this simply means that economists, unless they broaden their horizons, will be unable to make significant contributions to studying the behavior of unemployment.

I believe that as economists we have a particular obligation to be concerned about the allocation of resources, including research resources. It seems to me that we have approached, if we have not already passed, the point of diminishing returns in our preoccupation with the nuances of measurement. Specifically, there is a major need to learn more than we now know about the significant groups who today comprise the unemployed, as, for instance, case studies of the unemployed in distressed areas, such as eastern Pennsylvania and New England. We ought to learn more about seasonal industries with a predominance of female employees. I suspect that new patterns of an annual work cycle are developing in response to the institutionalization of unemployment insurance and other socio-economic developments. Likewise, it would be well to look into the unemployment problem in the Southeast where we are developing new work patterns based upon a simultaneous attachment of the worker to agriculture and industry.

[1] Eli Ginzberg, *Grass on the Slag Heaps: The Story of the Welsh Miners*, Harper, 1942, and *The Unemployed*, Harper, 1943.

There is a heightened need for such studies at the present time since we are confronted with a rather modest level of unemployment. When one out of every three or four persons is unemployed, as was the case during the major depression of the 1930's, social policy can be directed toward the alleviation of a gross pathological condition. At the present time the decision whether special social action is required and what types of action are indicated depends upon a much more specific appraisal of the conditions that prevail in different parts of the country among different groups of unemployed persons.

It may not be out of place at a conference sponsored by the National Bureau of Economic Research to raise the question whether increases in statistical information, which are a necessary condition of progress in the social sciences, may not on occasion become a danger. Wesley Mitchell produced his magnum opus on business cycles in 1913, working largely by himself. After the establishment of the National Bureau, a considerable number of able co-workers devoted their energies to investigating one or another aspect of the cycle. More and more attention was devoted to improving and expanding existing measurements.

As the years passed, two contradictory developments occurred. Constant improvement in the collection and analysis of the data took place at the same time that radical changes in the structure of our economic life made it increasingly difficult to use such data as a valid basis for appraising the present and the future. Moreover, the task of improving the statistical information proved so exhausting that less and less attention was paid to the relation between the new collections of economic facts and the alternatives of economic policy.

Without further elaboration, I want to suggest that we face a danger in becoming so preoccupied with refining our measures of unemployment that we lose our sensitivity to historical change and we fail to distinguish the 1930's from the 1950's by overlooking the meaning of such major institutional changes as the raising of the school-leaving age, the increasing participation of women in the labor force, the establishment of unemployment insurance, and a host of other important developments. Finally, we are on the verge of forgetting that all measurements that do not add significantly to new knowledge have value only as they contribute to improvements in social policy.