# Unemployment, Public Policy, and Families: Forecasts for the 1980s

PHYLLIS MOEN
*Cornell University*

*This paper speculates about the consequences of unemployment for families in the 1980s, using data from the recession of 1975 as well as findings from the period of the Great Depression. The paper addresses three issues: the likelihood of particular family types experiencing financial hardship in the face of unemployment, the implications of job and income loss for families and children, and the role of public policy in heightening or alleviating the toll of unemployment on families. The meaning of unemployment for families in the 1980s is both similar to and different from unemployment in the depressed 1930s or in the recession of 1975; however, one can build on the body of knowledge accumulated about economic hardship at other historical periods to estimate family implications of current and future high unemployment rates. A study of families during the 1975 recession found that families with preschoolers as well as black and single-parent families were most vulnerable to financial loss accompanying job loss, and that government income transfers did little to soften the economic blow of unemployment for these categories of families. Similar outcomes can be expected in the 1980s. Other possible consequences include a decline in family goals, increased ambiguity and apprehension concerning the future, and real as well as perceived loss of control. The dominant governmental concerns in the 1980s have been with fiscal restraint and major cutbacks in social programs; it is highly likely, therefore, that increasing numbers of families will experience financial setbacks and other adverse effects of job loss, and that the family costs of unemployment will continue to be high.*

As the unemployment rate in the United States began to creep upward in the 1980s, insecurity and privation took an increasing toll on the lives and lifestyles of individuals and families across the nation. Many have assumed, indeed have been encouraged to assume, the existence of a "safety net" of social programs stretching below families of the unemployed, providing a measure of financial security even in the face of joblessness. But the very programs comprised by this support system in the United States have themselves been cut and, in a few instances, abolished. Moreover, as we shall see, many families do not benefit from such programs as do exist.

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Department of Human Development and Family Studies, Cornell University, Ithaca, NY 14853.

This paper addresses the following principal question: What have been the impacts of this most recent recession on American families? Using available data on the consequences of job loss during other historical periods (particularly the Great Depression of the 1930s and the 1975 recession), three main themes are explored: the likelihood of particular categories of families experiencing financial hardship as a consequence of unemployment; the implications for families and children of job and income loss; and the role of public policy in mitigating or exacerbating the social costs of unemployment borne by America's families.

## THE FINANCIAL TOLL OF UNEMPLOYMENT: WHO PAYS?

Statistics on the incidence and economic consequences of unemployment are usually compiled on individuals, not families (see Moen, 1980). Yet when a father or single-parent mother loses a job, a family loses its major source of income. Even laying aside the psychological distress of unemployment (cf. Eisenberg and Lazarsfeld, 1938; Zawadski and Lazarsfeld, 1935; Komarovsky, 1940; Bakke, 1942; Cohn, 1978; Pearlin et al., 1981), we must acknowledge that its financial costs alone can be grim, with wide-ranging and long-lasting consequences for every family member.

*Lessons from the 1975 Recession*

As we progress through a recessionary period in the early 1980s, it may be instructive to look back to the recession of 1975 to gauge the implications of high unemployment rates for families. How did economic hard times for the nation as a whole in 1975 translate into personal difficulties for particular categories of families? Examining the data from a nationwide sample of American families (the Michigan Panel Study of Income Dynamics) revealed that more than one in six (17%) of the families with children had a breadwinner who was unemployed at some time during 1975 (Moen, 1979, 1982). Using two measures of hardship—major income *loss* (a 30% or greater drop) and a poverty level of income[1]—it was found that 40% of the families of the unemployed suffered a serious financial blow during the 1975 recession.

Single-parent mothers were less likely to be successful in avoiding economic hardships (either poverty or major income loss) than were unemployed fathers. The latter were also likely to be unemployed for a shorter period of time than were mothers heading families. Like those headed by single-parent mothers, black families were more vulnerable to financial crisis and more apt to experience longer spells of unemployment than were white families or those in which the father was the major provider.

Life stage was also important in calculating the financial costs of unemployment. Families in the early stages of the family cycle—i.e., with preschool children—were the most likely to have poverty-level incomes. It is clear that the *timing* of job loss affects its consequences; young families are less likely than established ones to have resources necessary to cope effectively with economic adversity. For example, parents of young children are often themselves young and lack the seniority, experience, and job skills that would enable them to regain employment quickly. Since parents of preschoolers are also the ones most likely to lose their jobs, the largest toll of an economic downturn is paid by families in the early years of childbearing and childrearing (Moen, 1980; Pearlin et al., 1981).

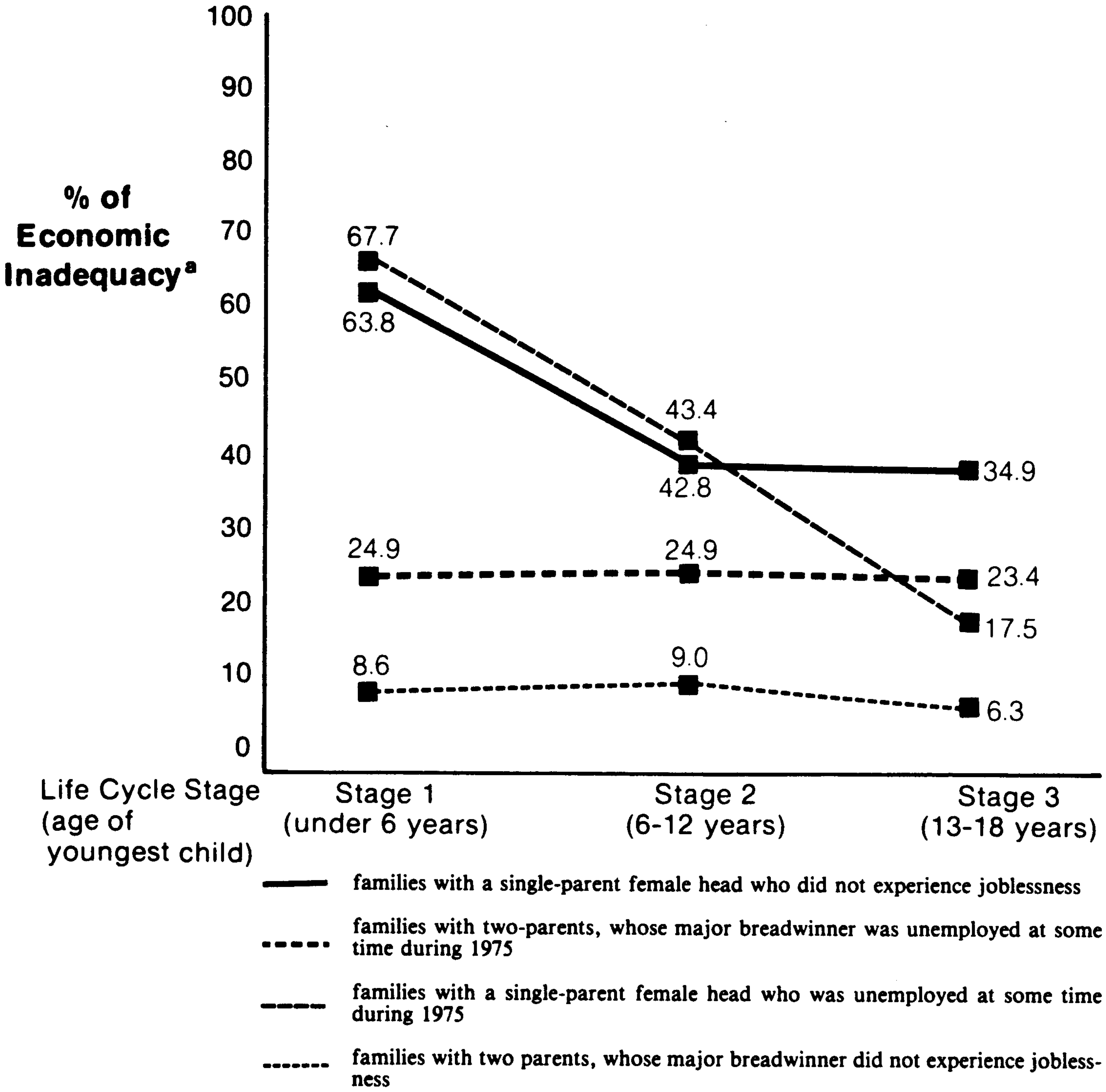
The burden is especially great for single-parent families. In fact, during the 1975 recession, families headed by unemployed mothers of young preschool children were the most likely to be poor; 67% of this group had marginal incomes in 1975 (see Figure 1). On the other hand, the families likely to experience major income loss (30% or more) were more often in the later stages of childrearing, with adolescents in the home (see Figure 2). This may well reflect the higher earnings of this group; they had more to lose before benefiting from government income transfers.

*Distribution of income supports.* It has been commonly assumed that in today's world financial hardship caused by unemployment is rare; what was a reality of the Great Depression of the 1930s is without currency in the 1970s and 1980s. Government income-transfer programs are seen as mitigating the economic costs of unemployment (Feldstein, 1977). Income transfers in the form of Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC) are said to cushion the effect of joblessness for families of the poor, while income transfers in the form of unemployment compensation are seen as similarly mitigating the effect of unemployment for middle- and working-class families.

While the full ramifications of these programs have not been investigated adequately, there is some information on their relevance for particular types of families. For example, Skidmore (1977) reports that transfer payments to poor families (from 1965 to 1972) primarily benefited female-headed families. On the other hand, husband-wife families in poverty have had few welfare programs directed toward them. Consequently, an analysis of the effects of cash transfers is not surprising, revealing that more female-headed families are lifted out of poverty by income transfers than are families in which a male is present (Plotnick, 1977).

Transfer payments to middle- and working-class families have been made principally through the unemployment insurance system, the purpose of which is income replacement. Promulgated as insurance against economic catastrophe (Feldstein, 1977; Garfinkel, 1978), in fact it has been an important mechanism for softening the financial blow of job loss for many families. Unemployment compensation, *for those who receive it*, was estimated to replace in the mid 1970s about two-thirds of a worker's lost net-wage income (Feldstein, 1977). However, the amount and duration of benefits have varied considerably among states and are, in the 1980s, increasingly prob-

FIGURE 1. INCIDENCE OF ECONOMIC INADEQUACY ACROSS THE LIFE CYCLE OF FAMILIES, BY EMPLOYMENT STATUS AND FAMILY TYPE




Source: Survey Research Center's Michigan Panel Study of Income Dynamics, 1975 wave (weighted sample: $N$ = 2,642).

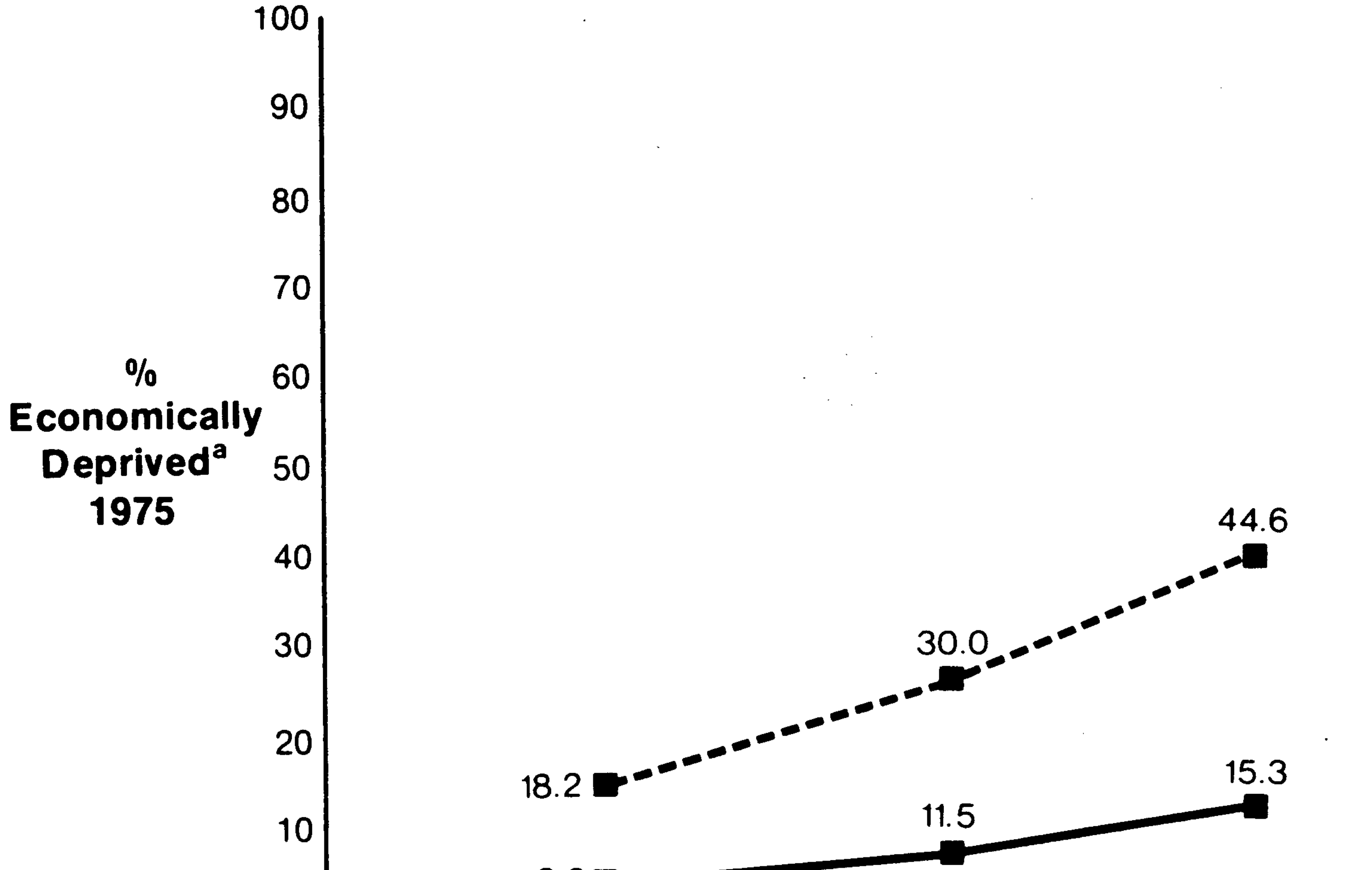
[a]Those families with a poverty-level income (adjusted total family income/need ratio less than 1.23).

lematic. Moreover, many of the working poor are excluded either because they are in occupations (such as domestic work) that are not covered or because they exhaust their benefits before successfully locating new employment.

The Table presents the proportions of families of various types who received unemployment compensation and/or welfare payments (AFDC) in 1975. While there are still other forms of income support—especially those transfers such as food stamps and medicaid—it is highly unlikely that in-kind transfers alone would appreciably alter a family's economic position (see findings in Duncan and Morgan, 1977).

Nearly half (48.1%) of the families with an unemployed breadwinner in 1975 received *no* income supports in the form of *either* AFDC *or* unemployment benefits. Fewer than 1% of the families received both welfare and unemployment benefits; and while nearly half (46.5%) received some

FIGURE 2. PERCENTAGE OF FAMILIES EXPERIENCING ECONOMIC DEPRIVATION ACROSS THE LIFE CYCLE, BY EMPLOYMENT STATUS




[a]Those families experiencing a 30% or greater income loss from 1974 to 1975.

unemployment compensation, less than 5% received AFDC payments.

Almost half (49.2%) of the two-parent families with a father out of work received unemployment compensation in 1975, while only about one-fourth of the women heading families drew such benefits. As would be expected, AFDC payments were given predominantly to single-parent mothers. Black families were more likely than white families to be on AFDC but less likely to draw unemployment compensation. Both black families and families headed by women were more likely to be without either form of income support.

What can one conclude about the distribution of government supports among families of the unemployed? These findings show that AFDC and unemployment compensation are alternative rather than overlapping programs. They are also more common for families whose breadwinners are without work for longer periods of time. However, the fact that half of the families of the unemployed received no income transfers underscores the exceedingly large gaps in the safety net.

*Preventing financial hardship.* Looking at the association between financial hardship and the receipt of government transfers during the 1975 recession reveals a number of findings about their effectiveness.

1. *Most families of the unemployed who suf-*

TABLE. COMMUNITY SUPPORTS FOR FAMILIES OF THE UNEMPLOYED[a] BY SELECTED CHARACTERISTICS

| | Percentage Utilizing Community Supports | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Characteristics | None | AFDC | Unemployment Compensation | Both AFDC and Unemployment Compensation | Total |
| All families of the unemployed | 48.1% | 4.5% | 46.5% | .9% | 100% |
| Family type | | | | | |
| Husband-wife/2-parent families | 47.6 | 2.5 | 49.2 | .8 | 100 |
| Female-headed/1-parent families | 52.4 | 20.3 | 25.2 | 2.1 | 100 |
| Race of head | | | | | |
| White | 46.3 | 3.4 | 49.6 | .7 | 100 |
| Black | 57.5 | 10.4 | 30.3 | 1.8 | 100 |
| Life-cycle stage (age of youngest child) | | | | | |
| Stage 1 (under 6 years) | 40.8 | 6.2 | 51.6 | 1.4 | 100 |
| Stage 2 (6-12 years) | 62.5 | 2.4 | 34.7 | .4 | 100 |
| Stage 3 (13-18 years) | 49.2 | 1.8 | 49.0 | .0 | 100 |

Source: Survey Research Center's Michigan Panel Study of Income Dynamics, 1975, 1976 waves (weighted sample: $N$ = 532).
[a]Those families whose head was unemployed at some time during 1975.

*fered financial hardship received no government income support.* Government transfers do appear to be an important strategy for preventing economic crisis in families of the unemployed. However, those without the cushion of unemployment compensation have a high probability of financial hardship.

2. *Unemployment benefits are an important coping mechanism for families of the long-term unemployed.* When a breadwinner was without a job for longer than 15 weeks, unemployment compensation played a major role in reducing the likelihood of hard times. AFDC payments, on the other hand, did not bring family income to an adequate (i.e., above poverty) level.
3. *Limiting the duration of unemployment appears to be as important a strategy for preventing financial hardship as is the availability of income support.* Two-thirds of the families who avoided a financial crisis had a breadwinner who became re-employed in less than 15 weeks. The probability that a family whose breadwinner had a short spell of joblessness would have a poverty-level income or major income loss was less than 20%. If the spell of joblessness were limited, the financial costs to families would be greatly reduced. This has obvious policy implications in the development of programs to reduce the duration of unemployment, if joblessness cannot be prevented altogether.
4. *Families with more than a single wage earner are much more able to avoid economic privation.* Families in which the wife was employed were half as susceptible to poverty as were families without an employed spouse. This fact underlines the particular vulnerability of a special category of families: those headed by a single parent.

*Forecasts for the 1980s*

The differential distribution and unequal sharing of the costs of unemployment across families in the 1975 recession are clearly evident. There is no reason to assume that these costs are significantly different in the 1980s, underscoring the plight of black families, single-parents, and parents of young children.

In fact, the early 1980s has been a time of record unemployment, with the official unemployment rate for October 1982 reaching 10.4%. The rate for married men, traditionally the group least likely to be jobless, reached 7.6%, compared with 11.2% for women maintaining families (U.S. Dept. of Labor, 1982a). Many families suffered economic hardship even before the upturn in unemployment rates. Data released by the Bureau of the Census in July 1982 revealed that fully 14% of the population lived below the poverty line in 1981. Particularly disadvantaged were blacks, with more than one in three (34.2%) failing to escape poverty in 1981 (Rich, 1982). Families in this decade, like those in the Depression era or those experiencing the recession of 1975, are more prone to economic loss if their major breadwinners lack the job security and higher wage levels that are the benefits of seniority. This means that families with young children are still very probably the group most vulnerable to financial hardship. Moreover, families of the unskilled and less educated will probably continue to be hard pressed to make ends meet. The situation of single-parent families, whose breadwinner is often without training, seniority, or job security, will remain particularly tenuous. In fact, Census Bureau data show that 34.6% of the families headed by women and 55.8% of the black families headed by women had poverty level incomes in 1981. Still more sobering is the fact that these 1981 figures do not yet reflect the result of cuts in social programs initiated in the 1980s or the increase in unemployment in 1982. The number of families who had at least one person unemployed was 8.3 million in the third quarter of 1982, up nearly 2 million from the previous year (U.S. Dept. of Labor, 1982b).

## IMPLICATIONS OF JOB AND INCOME LOSS FOR FAMILIES AND CHILDREN

Extracting the implications of job and economic loss for families and children in the 1980s is necessarily a speculative venture but one that can build on the body of knowledge accumulated about economic hardship during other historical periods. The meaning of unemployment in the 1980s is both similar to and different from joblessness in the depressed 1930s or in the recession of 1975. Hardship in the 1930s, when deprivation was a widely shared experience and a widely acknowledged public issue, is interpreted differently from economic loss in a period of relative, albeit uneven, prosperity.

Case studies from the Great Depression, as well as more recent data, have documented the fact that unemployment and its accompanying economic loss have manifold consequences for families of the unemployed in terms of lifestyle, interpersonal relations, and individual feelings of self-worth and efficacy. Families may respond to job loss by altering the family economy, changing family relationships, and increasing the level of individual tensions and strains. The means by which families try to adapt to job and/or economic loss, as well as the availability of family resources, mediate the effects of unemployment on individual family members.

For example, the socioeconomic status of families prior to the onset of unemployment conditions its financial impact. Families with a reserve of savings and other material assets are obviously in better shape to weather hard times than are families who have been living on the margins of their income. Similarly, unemployed workers with significant education and experience have a greater chance of being rehired than those without marketable credentials. Longitudinal studies of families in the Depression era (Elder, 1974, 1983) document the differential experiences of job loss in the life histories of middle-class and working-class families. Although middle-class families were equipped with greater resources, they also had more to lose, while working-class families were, in a sense, more experienced in making do with limited financial reserves. Still, in absolute terms, the latter lacked the resources to cope with an extended period of joblessness.

Specific adaptations and effects on the marital dyad and parent-child relationship are reviewed elsewhere (see Moen, Kain and Elder, 1983) and will not be discussed here. It may well be, however, that the immediate consequence of economic loss may be less significant than its long-range impacts, particularly the manner in which it conditions future expectations in life. Rainwater underscores the importance of expectations in affecting the outlook and behavior of individuals, asserting that the amount of money one has at a particular moment is not nearly as critical as the "stream of resources that he has good reason to believe will be available to him in the future" (1974:36). Cutting back or eliminating programs of financial support can only heighten uncertainties concerning the prospect of future income.

Indeed, the resilience of the family economy can be expected to be severely tested in the 1980s. High rates of unemployment create more strains at a time when families have fewer personal resources and can count on less institutional support. Even apart from unemployment, families generally have experienced a downturn in median earnings from 1981 to 1982 (U.S. Dept. of Labor, 1982b). They can be expected to respond to job and economic loss by restructuring roles and resources as well as by reappraising both the present situation and their prospects for the future. One can anticipate, for example, that there will be a reduction in the goals families set for themselves. When there is a gap between aspirations and possible achievements, the dissonance can be reduced by lowering goals to a more "realistic" level. There is little that families in the 1980s can do to ease the impact of a recessionary economy on their pocketbooks. But they can, and assuredly will, revise their plans, curtailing expenditures in an effort to make ends meet. Families facing the prospect of joblessness, as well as those with an unemployed member, will be compelled to alter their goals—giving up the dream vacation, postponing home buying or home improvements, delaying preventative health or dental care, finding low-cost recreation closer to home.

In general, we can expect an increase in ambiguity and apprehension concerning the future. The specter of unemployment destroys both immediate and long-term plans. Families at every economic level are increasingly unsure of what the future holds—for themselves, for their children. Those confronting economic loss will be forced to adopt new and more austere styles of living as well as to carve out new role relationships to deal with the realities of their financial situation. New patterns of decision making must slowly, often painfully, be developed. In the interim, the family's time schedule for achieving important goals—home ownership, higher education and financial emancipation of children, retirement—will be seriously disrupted.

Another consequence is real as well as perceived loss of control. In the face of financial loss, families can increase their debts, work more, or consume less; but there is a limit to what can be achieved by each of these lines of adaptation. Increased job insecurity is reducing the resources and options available to families. Their choices—to move or not move, to buy or build a house, to send a child to college, to have a first or second child—are more and more constrained by external factors beyond their control. Since problem-solving skills are transmitted from generation to generation, it remains to be seen what younger generations will learn from parents who are experiencing less control over their lives.

In fact, the consequences of job and economic loss for children in the 1980s are both obvious and problematic. What is obvious is what has happened in the past. Data from the Great Depression (Elder, 1974, 1983) inform us as to what we can expect when children's families experience deprivation. What is problematic is that the 1980s present new circumstances about whose implications we can only speculate.

It has been established that economic downturns have their greatest impact on families with children. It is, therefore, the lives of children that are most likely to be touched by unemployment in the years ahead. Recent (1980) census statistics (U.S. Department of Commerce, 1981) underscore this point: the highest poverty rate is for children under age 3 (21% compared with 13% for the general population). This means that in March, 1980 one child in five under 3 years of age was living in conditions of poverty. These statistics can only be expected to become still grimmer with the rising unemployment rate in 1982.

We know that economic deprivation means that fewer resources are devoted to the care and socialization of children. A logical adaptive response in hard times is to cut back on such "frills" as recreational opportunities, vacations, books, toys. Educational pursuits are also likely to be curtailed, as are preventative medical and dental care.

From studies of the Great Depression it would appear that the timing of economic loss in a child's life is critical to any assessment of its impacts, with younger children being more vulnerable to adverse effects than are older children. Both short-term and long-range consequences of economic hardship for preschoolers are documented in Elder's Berkeley study of families during the Great Depression (1979). He found that parental behavior was an important link between economic misfortune and the experience of children. Financial loss increased the temperamental behavior of fathers (but not of mothers) which, in turn, increased their punitive actions toward their children. Such punishment increased the likelihood of temper tantrums in children, which, in turn, increased the prospects of more punishment—literally a vicious circle. Elder's examination of the lives of children in deprived circumstances paints a vivid picture of emotional and social difficulties, problems in school and, later, problems at work. For many, these problems were perpetuated well into adulthood.

As in the years of the Great Depression, adolescents in families experiencing economic setbacks in the 1980s can be expected to share the costs of their family's present and future economic plight. For many, the expense of a college education may become prohibitive; but unlike earlier periods of economic downturn, today's adolescent will find it equally difficult to take on adult roles in the world of work. The unemployment rate for young people, particularly black youth, is outrageously high (48% for black males aged 16-19 years in October 1982—see U.S. Dept. of Labor, 1982a). Adolescents, then, are burdened with adult problems but lack the principal means to participate in adult solutions: jobs.

With such limited educational and employment opportunities, today's young people will find it more difficult to make their way in society than did earlier cohorts. Each generation of Americans has assumed that it will surpass the accomplishments and status of the preceding generation. Many adolescents in the 1980s will have to face the harsh reality of downward mobility, confronting the likelihood that they are not going to achieve what their parents have achieved. Adolescents and adults alike may come to have less confidence in the ability of society to establish the conditions that enable them to achieve their goals or even to meet their most basic needs.

Conversely, as in the Great Depression, economic misfortune also may have a few serendipitous outcomes. Families can develop greater cohesiveness as they mobilize to confront their economic plight. A more labor-intensive household may upgrade the domestic responsibilities and, hence, the role of children within the family. Nurturant family ties are likely to gain value when they are threatened or fractured by economic pressures. Hard times may not necessarily be the worst of times in all respects. Still, it is well to keep in mind that the costly toll in children's lives is certain to rise if living conditions for less fortunate families continue to decline.

## POLICY DISPOSITIONS FOR THE 1980s

It is important to recognize that the likelihood of unemployment as well as the severity of its financial repercussions for families are shaped by broad social, economic, and political forces—both historical and contemporaneous. These serve to shape the options and opportunities families have to adapt to and recover from the experience of joblessness. For example, social insurance in the form of unemployment benefits has, since its inception in the 1930s, been highly instrumental in enabling some families to weather otherwise crippling spells of unemployment. In the 1980s cutbacks in government programs, as well as the lack of opportunities for re-employment, render the prospects for the families of the unemployed bleak.

Two principle strategies have been applied to deal with economic change in the United States. At the macro level there have been active fiscal and monetary policies to preclude or remedy a sluggish labor market. A healthy economy is seen as providing the best kind of job insurance for individual workers, but it is also well to recognize that some persons are not easily served through fiscal and monetary manipulations. Even in a period of "full employment" (an ambiguous concept at best), some portion of the labor force remains jobless. Moreover, even where such macro policies have their desired result, there is an invariable lag between government action and economic response. During this period of delay the financial toll on families experiencing unemployment can be devasting, both in terms of day to day living and in planning for the future. Lessons from the 1930s (cf. Angell, 1936; Bakke, 1940; Komarovsky, 1940; Cavan and Ranck, 1938) need not be relearned.

The second basic policy strategy—the provision of social supports in the form of job training, job creation, and unemployment insurance—serves to fill in the gaps left by macroeconomic policies and to deal with more specific structural problems. However, these social programs have fallen well short of achieving their ambitious purposes. The data reported here on the 1975 recession show that financial hardships accompanying unemployment are still very much a reality for a significant portion of American families.

The federal policy agenda for the early 1980s appears to place increased reliance on fiscal and monetary policies, while reducing the commitment to sustaining social supports. Yet analysis of the financial condition of families of the unemployed during the 1975 recession reveals disturbing facts about the effectiveness of "safety net" income transfers that may be equally relevant to a recessionary economy in the 1980s. The study of families reported here points to three conditions that buffer the impact of unemployment: a shorter period of unemployment, the availability of secondary earners, and the receipt of unemployment compensation.

Public policies facilitating the employment of women (flexible work patterning, day care, nondiscriminatory hiring and wage practices) could help both two-earner families and single-parent women make ends meet, but they are slow in being developed and implemented. Programs to limit the duration of unemployment, such as those embodied in the Comprehensive Employment and Training Act (CETA), are currently being phased out or folded into a more modest job-training program. Similarly, unemployment compensation, which is also being cut back, is not a universally applicable transfer strategy. Benefits are paid only to those who meet eligibility requirements, not to everyone without a job who wants to work (Feldstein, 1977). In addition, there is considerable variability among the states in eligibility requirements as well as in the amount and duration of benefits.

## CONCLUSIONS

The lines of adaptation available to families confronting unemployment are contingent on historically grounded options and choices. For example, families undoubtedly are objectively better off in the 1980s than they were in the 1930s, because a variety of public welfare supports are already in place. However, unlike the period of the New Deal in the 1930s, one has little cause for optimism that government programs will, in fact, either reduce the threat of hard times or mitigate their family effects. The United States is unique among the industrialized nations in failing to provide wide-ranging economic supports for families, particularly those raising children. Most American families rely exclusively on earned income in order to make ends meet. When that income is jeopardized by unemployment, the family faces financial trouble. Thus, the resources and options of individual families are constrained by a political climate that offers little public support for families experiencing hard times. These families also are limited by the often stringent eligibility requirements of such income-transfer programs as do exist. For example, if adolescent children become employed, they may jeopardize their family's ability to receive certain welfare benefits (Perloff and Wachter, 1980).

In addition, family labor reserves are far different from those in the 1930s, when a wife could seek employment to enable her family to weather financial hardship. Two salaries are increasingly required to maintain an adequate standard of living, making the wife's employment essential even under relatively stable economic conditions. Wives and mothers, therefore, are less likely to be a "reserve army of the unemployed" who can enter the labor force when families face hard times. Single-parent mothers often are financially hard pressed even when holding down full-time jobs. Unemployment for these women is, therefore, particularly devastating.

The historical milieu of the 1980s can be expected to exacerbate both family vulnerability to economic hardship and the consequences of that hardship. Given the overriding concern with fiscal restraint and the trend toward cutbacks in social programs, it is highly probable that more families will experience financial setbacks from job loss and that the average duration of economic hardship will be much longer. Recent census data bear this out: from 1979 to 1980 there was an increase of 3.2 million persons below the poverty line, one of the largest such increases in any one year since poverty statistics have been kept (U.S. Department of Commerce, 1981:1). The number in poverty has continued to grow, with 32 million Americans identified as poor in 1981, when the unemployment rate had not yet reached its double-digit proportions (Rich, 1982).

In spite of forecasts for the leveling off of unemployment in the United States, one can anticipate that the predicament of families of the unemployed will not abate in the 1980s. A high proportion of the families raising the next generation of Americans seems destined to bear not only the expense of raising children but the added costs of unemployment as well.

## FOOTNOTE

1. Poverty is based on income in relation to needs. Needs is an estimate adjusted for the economies of scale related to family size and based on the USDA low cost food plan. For a fuller discussion of this measure, see Moen, 1978.

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