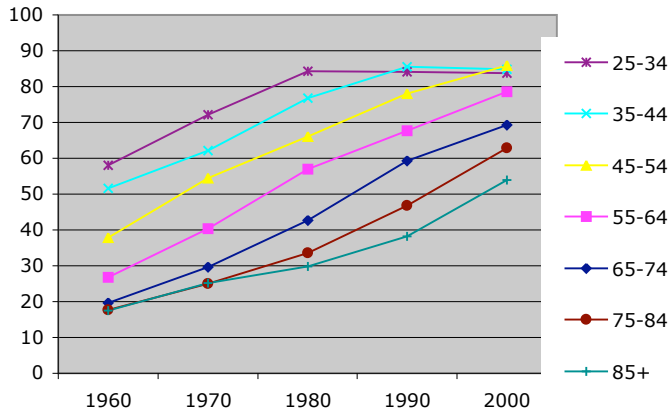


Alternative Formats for Age-Period-Cohort Social Data

What is Graphed is Percent of Adults Who Completed High School

A. Historical Trends by Age Groups



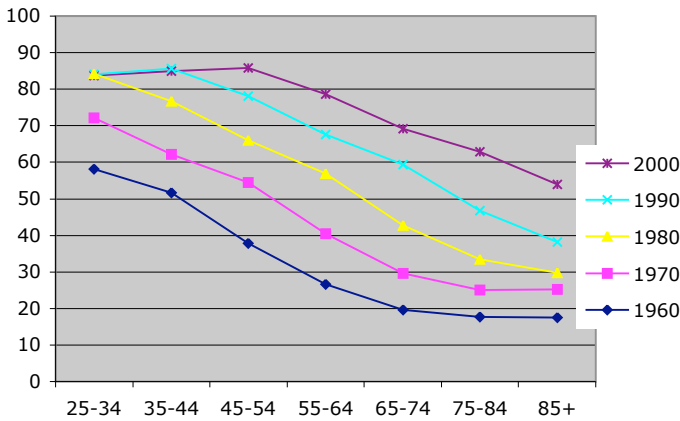
Advantages:

Straight-forward graph of rectangular data table showing historical trends of social data by age group.

Disadvantages:

Often misleading picture of change over time, in this case suggesting all people experience sharply rising education.

B. Age Cross-Section by Periods



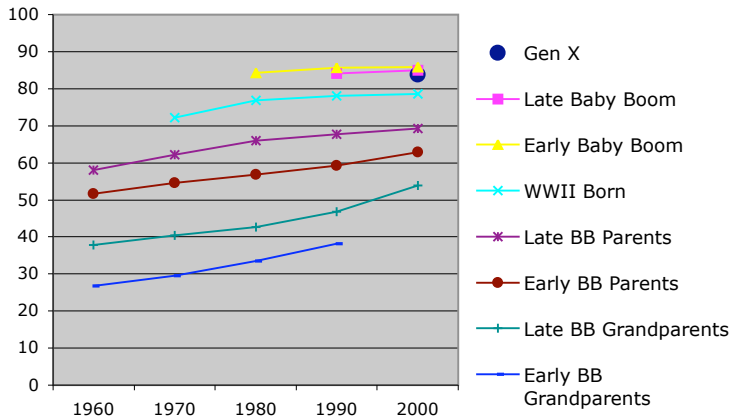
Advantages:

Straight-forward graph of rectangular data table showing age patterns of social data by age compared across periods.

Disadvantages:

Often misleading picture of change over time, in this case suggesting people lose their education as they age.

C. Period Trajectories by Cohorts.....



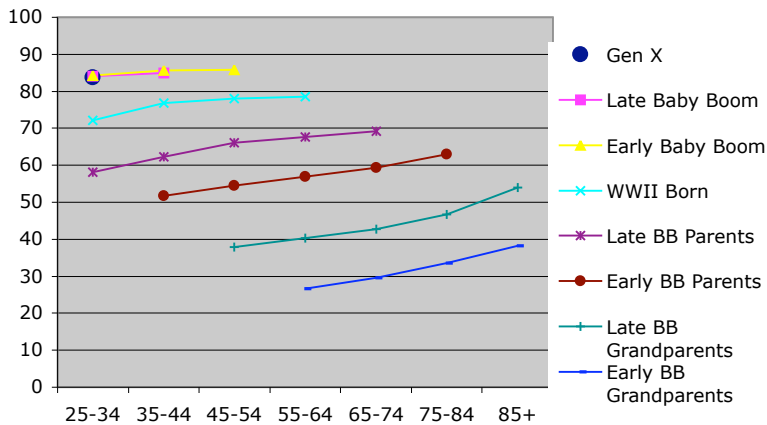
Advantages:

Shows continuity of cohort status across decades, beginning from the decade when the cohort was age 25-34 or the earliest age at which it was observed in 1960.

Disadvantages:

Cannot directly track cohorts' status at each age in the life course. (For example, the accelerated upturn in education for the baby boom grandparents between 1990 and 2000 cannot be explained.)

D. Age Trajectories by Cohorts.....



Advantages:

Shows continuity of cohort status across the life course, beginning from age 25-34 or the earliest age at which it was observed in 1960, and continuing to the oldest age attained by the end of the observation period. Behavior in distinct life stages can be compared across generations (including the accelerated upturn in education beginning at age 75-84 that is due to earlier death of the less educated).

Disadvantages:

Cannot directly track cohorts' status at each decade of history.

Compiled by Dowell Myers