

Table 3.1 AGE RANGES FOR THE TIMING OF AGE-RELATED TRANSITIONS, LATE 1950S
VERSUS LATE 1970S

Age-related transitions and events	Age Range	Late 50s study: Percent who agree		Late 70s study: Percent who agree	
		Men	Women	Men	Women
Best age for a man to marry	20-25	80	90	42	42
Best age for a woman to marry	19-24	85	90	44	36
When most people should become grandparents	45-50	84	79	64	57
Best age for most people to finish school and go to work	20-22	86	82	36	38
When most men should be settled on a career	24-26	74	64	24	26
When most men hold their top jobs	45-50	71	58	38	31
When most people should be ready to retire	60-65	83	86	66	41
When a man has the most responsibilities	35-50	79	75	49	50
When a man accomplishes most	40-50	82	71	46	41
The prime of life for a man	35-50	86	80	59	66
When a woman has the most responsibilities	25-40	93	91	59	53
When a woman accomplishes most	30-45	94	92	57	48
A good-looking woman	20-35	92	82	33	24
A young man	18-22	84	83	29	22
A middle-aged man	40-50	86	75	41	47
An old man	65-75	75	57	52	37
A young woman	18-24	89	88	41	25
A middle-aged woman	40-50	87	87	49	50
An old woman	60-75	83	87	50	44

Source: Patricia M. Passuth, David R. Maines, and Bernice L. Neugarten, "Age Norms and Age Constraints Twenty Years Later." Paper presented at the annual meeting of the Midwest Sociological Society, Chicago, 1984.