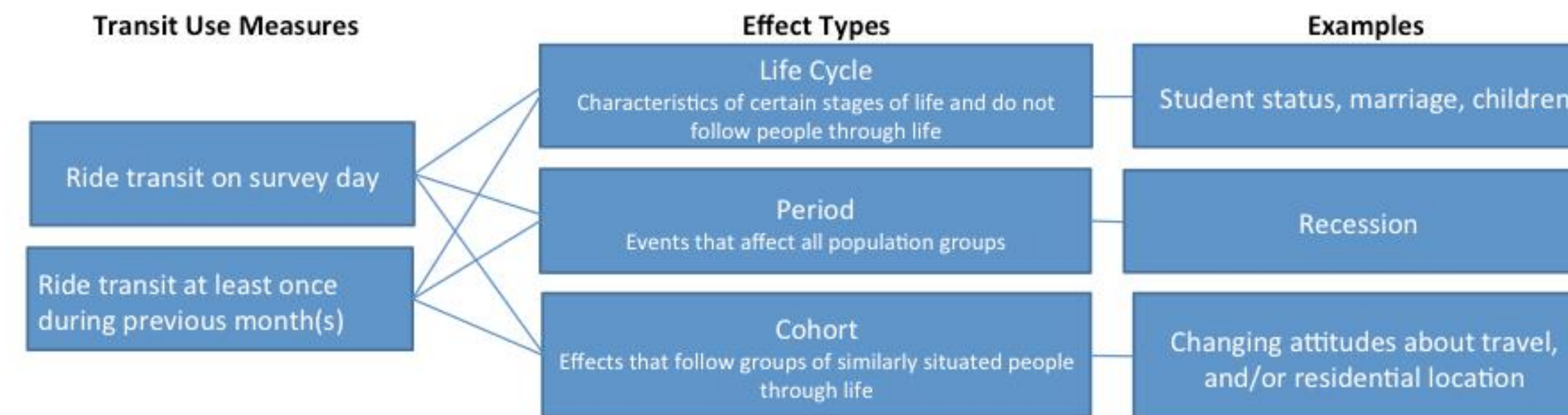


A Taste for Transit?

Youth and Public Transit in the U.S.

MOTIVATION

Many scholars and the popular media alike cite renewed enthusiasm for public transit among America's youth. But what explains higher transit use among youth and can we expect transit use to persist as they age?



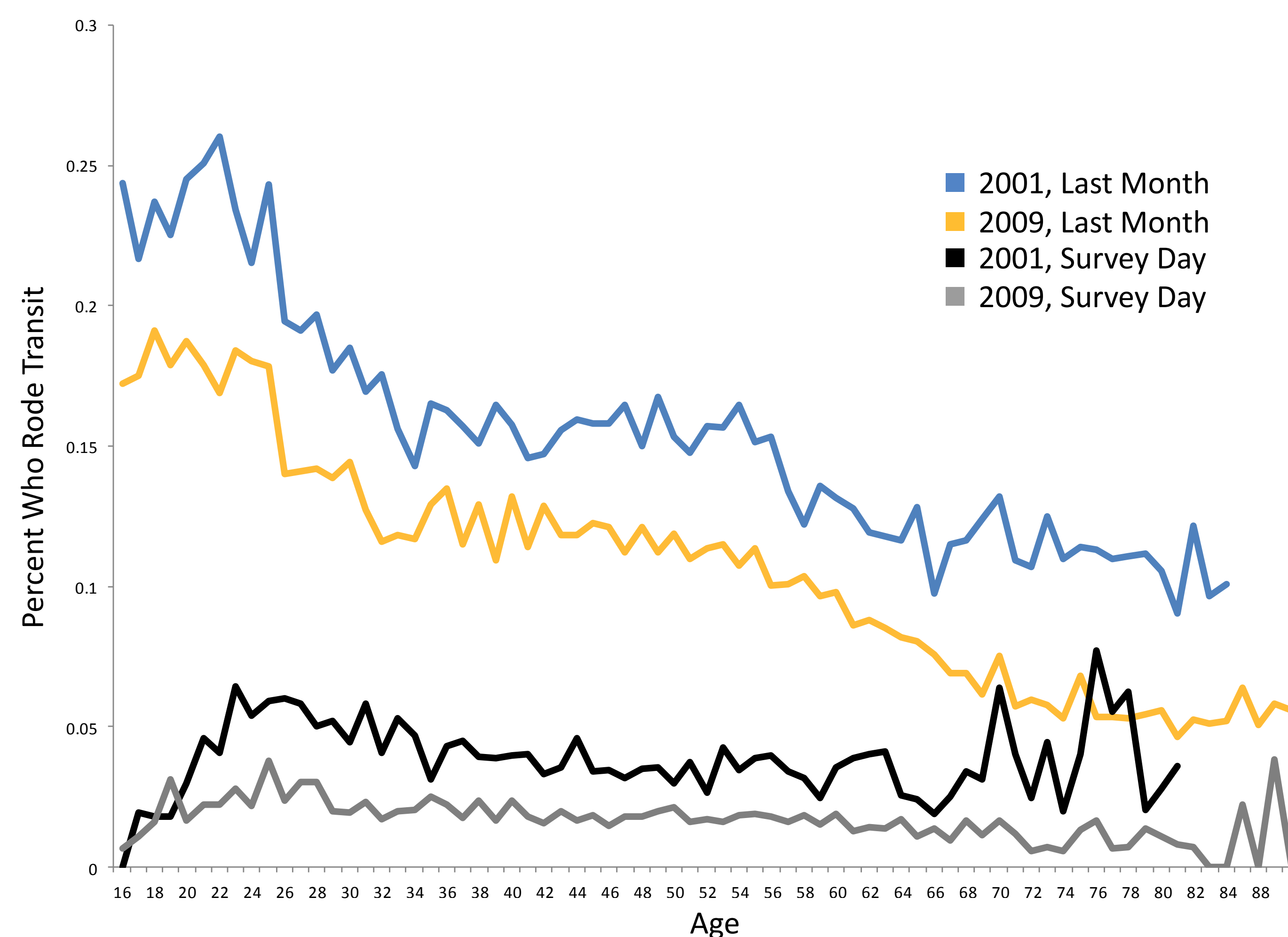
METHODS

Data: 2001 and 2009 National Household Travel Survey.

Logistic regression models test the causal relationship between transit ridership and period, life cycle, and cohort effects in two scenarios:

- 1) Percent riding transit on the survey day
- 2) Percent who rode transit at least once during previous month

RESULTS: DO YOUTH RIDE TRANSIT MORE?



←

- Transit use declines with age.
- A higher percentage of people take transit at least once per month compared to the survey day.
- Transit use across all ages declined between 2001 and 2009.

→

- Age but not birth cohort is associated with increased transit use.
- Life cycle effects dominate explanations for transit use.

RESULTS: WHAT PREDICTS TRANSIT USE?

Dependent Variables			
Household Characteristics	Individual Characteristics	Neighborhood Characteristics	
+ Household size	- Age	+ Transit supply	
- Lives with kids	+ Is a student	NS Transit supply * Age	
NS Lives with parents	+ Is employed	+ Residential density	
+ Household income	+ Black <small>[Base: Non-Hispanic White]</small>	Cohort Effects	
- Household vehicle count	+ Hispanic <small>[Base: Non-Hispanic White]</small>	NS Birth decade <small>[Base: born 1980-1990]</small>	
	+ Other race/ethnicity <small>[Base: Non-Hispanic White]</small>	Period Effects	
	NS Female	NS Year <small>[Base: 2001]</small>	

CONCLUSIONS

- Age alone, apart from life cycle effects, does not explain increased transit use among youth.
- It is possible that, like generations before them, Millennials will decrease transit use as they age.

POLICY IMPLICATIONS

- Increasing transit use per capita is far from assured as Millennials age.
- Concerted efforts to improve transit frequency and reliability could enable Millennials to do what previous generations have not—and what Millennials themselves do not appear poised to do on their own — which is to continue to use transit as they age.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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