

Macro Roundup Article

Headline: [Intergenerational Mobility in American History: Accounting for Race and Measurement Error](#)

Article Link: <https://www.aeaweb.org/articles?id=10.1257/aer.20200292&&from;=f>

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Summary: This paper's main message is that historical mobility was lower than previously estimated in linked data. To show why, I account for two measurement issues: unrepresentative samples and measurement error. First, I account for unrepresentative samples by adding Black families, who historical studies routinely drop. Second, I address measurement error by using multiple father observations to more accurately capture his permanent economic status. Using linked census data from 1850 to 1940, I show that accounting for race and measurement error can double estimates of intergenerational persistence. Updated estimates imply that there is greater equality of opportunity today than in the past, mostly because opportunity was never that equal. Related: Chetty and Saez Debunk the Claim That Income Mobility is Declining in the U.S. and The Inheritance Of Social Status: England, 1600 to 2022 and The Economics of Inequality in High-Wage Economies

Primary Topic: Mobility/Assortive Mating

Topics: Academic paper, Database, Important!, Mobility/Assortive Mating, Workforce

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