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“Color and Families: Demographic and socioeconomic differentials according to skin tones in the US”

I investigate the role skin color plays on socioeconomic and demographic outcomes (family formation in particular) for men and women of all races/ethnicities and immigration status in the NLSY97. By applying a novel, scaled measure of skin tone to a nationally representative sample and by estimating the longitudinal evolution of outcomes, I contribute to a burgeoning literature on skin color differentials and on immigrant assimilation. Preliminary findings reveal gaps between the lightest and the darkest-skinned individuals with some differences emerging from the contrast between males and females, suggesting that a blurring of the color line elicits meaningful variation in trajectories of individuals in the United States. These patterns suggest that policies that deal with racial discrimination and immigrant assimilation have to factor in challenges that come from the nuanced role played by phenotype on human relations.

Keywords: skin color, immigration, race, socioeconomic outcomes, family formation

JEL Codes: J15; J16; J71; Z13

Skin Tone and the Link between Racial Composition of High School Peers and
Life Course Outcomes: Education, Work, and Home Ownership

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JEL Codes: J15, K21, Z13, J60

Key Words: Skin Shade, Educational Attainment, Employment, Wealth
Accumulation

Abstract: Du Bois (1935) asserted that black students are better served by attending predominantly black schools, relative to integrated schools, as long as the wider society was engaged in racial discrimination. Nevertheless, the conventional assertion in economics (Boozer, Krueger, and Wolkon 1992) is that black students benefit educationally by attending a school with more white peers due to greater resources at such schools. However, the functionality of discrimination theory (Darity 2001) advances the idea that the intensity of discrimination that black students face is greater in more integrated school settings than when they are educated in an environment where virtually all of the students are black or in situations with peers who are predominantly white. Given this framework, a “U-shaped” – non-monotonic – relationship between years of educational attainment and high school racial composition is possible. To date this literature neglects the possibility that black students with lighter skin shade face less discrimination in racially integrated school settings and thus accumulate more education than their darker skinned blacks when educated in integrated schools. We test this hypothesis using data from the National Survey of Black Americans. Moreover, we explore if the racial composition of the high school black students attend influences their subsequent likelihood of being employed and owning a home – and whether this relationship varies with skin shade.

Trends in Gender and Racial Wage Gaps Among Information Science Workers

Gabriel Courey and John S. Heywood

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DRAFT (March 30, 2016)

Information science (IS) provides an interesting case study in earnings by gender as over the period from 1975 to 1990 there was a large influx of women that has since reversed. We present the raw and unexplained gender wage differentials in each year from 1995 to 2015, a period with *declining* participation of women in the field. We find the raw differential shrinks over the last two decades but demonstrate a persistent unexplained differential that shows no trend or a modest decline. We examine the black-nonblack differential as a comparative exercise. In contrast to women, the participation of blacks has increased but the trend in the raw differential is more modest and the unexplained differential shows a no trend. We suggest that the pattern of differentials is unlikely to provide a rationale for the changing patterns of participation but stress the importance of estimating gender wage gaps for a specific occupation such as IS in order to hold constant the changing gender and racial composition across occupations.

Keywords: Wage Differentials; Trends; Decomposition; Race; Gender

JEL Codes: J15, J16, J31

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Why Are Women's and Men's Work Lives Converging?

Demography, Human Capital Investments and Lifetime Earnings

Joyce Jacobsen, Melanie Khamis, and Mutlu Yuksel

November 2015

Abstract

This paper investigates the observed trends in demographic patterns of increases in life expectancy and decreases in birth rates alongside increases in returns to human capital investment, increases in real earnings and expected lifetime earnings for men and women as potential explanations for the increased convergence of women's and men's work lives.

Employing annual U.S. Census Annual Demographic Files and demographic data from Vital Statistics and World Development Indicators from 1964 through 2013, we estimate long-run relationships between actual life expectancy or actual birth rates, human capital investments and actual and expected labor market outcomes for men and women. Findings suggest a long-run relationship for all these variables for women while for men, changes in birth rates do not matter.

The long-run relationships are overall more convincing for women than men: Shocks to demography, human capital investments and real hourly earnings have permanent effects on women's lifetime earnings while for men only one type of shock - a change in the return to college - has a long-run impact on lifetime earnings.

Keywords: life expectancy, lifetime earnings, human capital investment, VECM

JEL classification: J3, J16, J24, N3, C22

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ABSTRACT

The Civil Rights Act and the Earnings of Lower Income Hispanic Men in the 1960's

This paper uses Social Security longitudinal earnings records matched to Current Population Survey data to examine changes in the relative earnings of Hispanic men during a period of dramatic change in public and private policies toward race and ethnicity characterized by, but not limited to, the Civil Rights Act of 1964. Our principle focus is to compare and contrast how lower income Hispanic and African-American men fared during the civil rights era relative to lower-income non-Hispanic whites. Although previous studies have analyzed black economic progress using annual data before and after the Civil Rights Act, this is the first study to do so for Hispanics. We follow a longitudinal sample of individuals who were in the labor market before and after the passage of the Civil Rights Act. Following the same individuals holds constant an array of unmeasured variables such as labor force selectivity and schooling quality that may correlate with the post-1964 period; our approach addresses concerns that the results are the product of changes in these variables. Of particular note—we uncover a significant acceleration following the Civil Rights Act in the relative earnings of low-income Hispanic men.

JEL Classification: J48, J71, J78, J15, J18

Keywords: anti-discrimination legislation, minority economic progress, Mexican Americans, Hispanic, low income, Civil Rights Act, administrative records

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