

Historical Post-disaster Migration Across the Life Course: Evidence from One Century of Linked U.S. Censuses

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While climate and environmental migration has received growing attention in recent years, it is not a new phenomenon. People have long migrated in response to climate and environmental stressors, such as during the 1930s Dust Bowl which impacted the Great Plains region of the US. Beyond the Dust Bowl, however, migration in response to other large-scale historical disasters remains understudied. In this project, we use recently linked U.S. census data from 1850 to 1940 provided by the Census Tree Project to analyze historical post-disaster migration patterns across the life course. We start by analyzing whether and how age-specific post-disaster migration patterns differ from regional age-specific migration patterns. We then compare age-specific migration patterns within and across different disasters to identify potential disaster specific age signatures of migration. In doing so, this study will contribute to our understanding of historical climate and environmental migration patterns and provide insight to the potential age-specific migratory implications of increasing disaster exposure today.