The Mill Family Revisited:

Evidence from the North Carolina Textile Industry

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Abstract

I study the impact of exposure to industrial opportunities on womens fertility and marriage decisions. During the late nineteenth century, the textile industry in the South expanded dramatically. This represented a significant employment opportunity for white women. Using a newly digitized dataset which captures individual mills in North Carolina and yearly data on ownership, class of factory, and power source in combination with the full count census data, and the Longitudinal, Intergenerational Family Electronic Micro-Database (LIFE-M), I estimate whether women and their daughters, change marriage and birth timing in response to increased demand for women's labour. This work speaks to the demographic transition by using more granular and greater intergenerational data for women than was previously available.