The Southern Economic History Project, 1968-1975

1KF, CUP, 1977

Roger Ransom
Richard Sutch
Matthew Sobek

One Kind of Freedom Was Written In the Political, Social, & Intellectual Climate of the 1960s:

The Civil Rights Movement

Political Activism of Afro-Americans

Demands for Black History Curriculum
Black History and Economic History in the 1960s:

Economic Historians Had Paid a Lot of Attention to SLAVERY

But Not Much Attention to the LEGACY OF SLAVERY

Almost NOTHING About the Experience of Freed Slaves After EMANCIPATION

We Hoped to Fill That Void

Explaining the Rise of Sharecropping After the War

We Needed Data on Tenure and Race

⇒ Collect a Sample of Southern Farms From the Manuscript Schedules of the 1880 Census
Whole South, Cotton South

- 11 former Confederate States
- 1,230,905 farms reported in 1880
- 993 Counties
- 61 “Homogeneous” Regions
- 73 Sample Counties
- 11,202 sampled farms

- Cotton Belt portions of those states
- 546,332 farms reported in 1880
- 336 Counties
- 17 “Homogenous” Regions
- 27 Sample Counties
- 5,318 sampled Farms
Blacks Shaped The Impact of Emancipation

Freed Slaves *Choose* to Work Substantially Less Than They Had Under Slavery

- 25% Decline in Labor on Farms

Blacks *Choose* Sharecropping Rather Than Working for Wages

- Demise of Large Plantations
Southern Agriculture Experienced A Dramatic Fall in Self-Sufficiency

Farmers No Longer Grew Enough Food To Feed their Families

Farms Without enough Food Were Vulnerable to Economic Exploitation

Can it Stand After Twenty-Five Years?
Many Reasons to Suspect it Will Not.

- New Research, New Insights
  - 147 Books
  - 194 Journal Articles
  - 22 Journal Reviews

Another Reason

- Computational Power
  - 1968-74 SEHP at work
  - 1971 Microprocessor invented (Intel 4004)
  - 1977 1KF sent to publisher
  - 1977 RAM chip introduced
  - 1983 IBM XT introduced
- Econometric Technique and Software
  - early 1980s discrete choice modeling
  - mid 1980s PC-based statistical software
What can we do today that we could not twenty-five years ago?
We can include the Whole South

The Cotton South
Was the Peripheral South different than the Cotton South?

Percent of Small-Scale Family-Operated Farms with Cotton

- Cotton Penumbra
- Sea Islands
- General Farming Region
- Sugar Region

Cotton South
Mixed Cotton Region
The Whole South

White
Black
What can we do today that we could not twenty-five years ago?

We can use IPUMS

Integrated Public Use Microdata Series
1910 Census Population Schedule: Partial Sample

Selected Variables From the Census

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Household</th>
<th>Person</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>State</td>
<td>Age</td>
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<tr>
<td>Region</td>
<td>Sex</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>County</td>
<td>Race</td>
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<tr>
<td>Metropolitan area</td>
<td>Marital status</td>
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<td>City</td>
<td>Children ever born</td>
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<tr>
<td>Urban/rural</td>
<td>Birthplace</td>
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<td>Farm status</td>
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<td>Language</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Occupation</td>
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<td>Unemployment</td>
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Census Persons Number of Year Population in Sample Variables

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Population</th>
<th>Persons in Sample</th>
<th>Number of Variables</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1850</td>
<td>23,191,876</td>
<td>198,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>1860</td>
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<td>1870</td>
<td>39,818,449</td>
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<td>1900</td>
<td>75,994,575</td>
<td>100,000</td>
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<td>1910</td>
<td>91,972,266</td>
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<td>1920</td>
<td>105,710,620</td>
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<tr>
<td>1940</td>
<td>131,669,275</td>
<td>1,351,000</td>
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<td>1950</td>
<td>150,697,361</td>
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<td>1960</td>
<td>178,464,236</td>
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<td>1970</td>
<td>203,302,031</td>
<td>12,180,000</td>
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<td>1980</td>
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<td>1990</td>
<td>248,718,301</td>
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</table>

Samples in the IPUMS

White Men | Black Men
---|---
Non-Farm | Farm Labor
Farmer

White Women | Black Women
---|---
Non-Farm | Farm Labor
The Life-Cycle and the Agricultural Tenure Ladder
Warning: Synthetic Cohort May be Very Misleading
What can we do today that we could not twenty-five years ago?
We Can Examine
The Disappearance of Self-Sufficiency and the Dependence upon Purchased Grain
Throughout the South
Conclusion:

Many Southern Farmers Were Dependent on Purchased Food Throughout the South
What can we do today that we could not twenty-five years ago?

Literacy Rates by Birth Cohort, 1870-1900
Blacks, 12 to 55, 5 Cotton States

Percent who can Read and Write
Five Year Moving Averages
to Correct for Age Heaping
Male Occupational Structure

- Upper White-Collar Jobs
- Agricultural Jobs

School Enrollment, Age 5-17
High-School Graduates, Age 25-64

- White
- Black

Percent High School Graduates

Year