"Ethnicity, Gender, and Migrant Self-selection: Evidence from French Canadians during the Early Twentieth Century"

David Escamilla-Guerrero
University of St Andrews

Chris Minns
London School of Economics

Abstract

This paper uses newly digitized border crossings data to assess the self-selection of English and French Canadian migrants to the United States between 1895 and 1930. Unlike previous studies on Canadian emigration that focus on occupation, we use information on the height of migrants to measure selection. As heights were recorded for all adults crossing the border, we are able to document patterns of selection for both male and female migrants. Our preliminary findings show that Canadian migrants to the United States were positively self-selected. French Canadian men appear to have been more positively selected than their Anglophone counterparts. Female migrants were even more positively selected than male migrants, a pattern that holds for both English and French Canadian women.