

## **Intergenerational Social Mobility of Asian Americans Under the Shadow of Asian Exclusion (1882–1943)**

An early sociological view in the United States, traceable to Edward Alsworth Ross (1866–1951), was that Asian American immigrants had lower standards for their children’s education than Whites. According to this reasoning, it was not until the Civil Rights Movement that the socioeconomic profiles of Asian Americans began to improve, leading to a new well-educated, “model minority” generation. With recently released linked 1900–1940 full-count U.S. Census microdata, Professor Xi Song’s research challenges this view with new evidence on the intergenerational mobility of native-born Asian Americans before the Civil Rights Movement. She finds that Chinese and Japanese Americans who grew up during 1882–1943, a period of anti-Asian policies in the U.S. (for example, the Chinese Exclusion Act and the Gentleman’s Agreement), exhibited exceptionally high educational mobility amid these policies. However, their higher educational mobility failed to translate into higher occupational mobility. The discrepancy between educational and occupational mobility suggests labor market discrimination was at work for Asian Americans prior to the Civil Rights Movement.