

## Racial and Ethnic Differences in Retrospective Reports of Childhood Health

Life course studies of health often rely on retrospective reports of childhood conditions and child health as the anchors for life course processes. Although some research points to the validity of these reports, no attention has been paid to race/ethnic differences in reported childhood health and the factors that may explain these differences. This is important because race/ethnic differences in childhood health are important in understanding the origins of adult health disparities. We analyze differences in ratings of general child health using the HRS ( $n = 12,359$ ) and logistic models. We find that Non-Hispanic Blacks, Native-Born Hispanics and Foreign-Born Hispanics are more likely to report poor general child health than Non-Hispanic Whites. These differences are strengthened when childhood diseases are controlled but mediated when socioeconomic conditions are controlled. Because of the observed differences global measures of child health appear to be more robust when exploring the origins of health disparities.