

## **A Century of Adolescent Employment in the United States, 1870-1970**

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*This study considers the historical pattern of adolescent employment in the United States between 1870 and 1970. We document what we believe to be two previously undocumented facts: (1) most of the transition from a high to a low adolescent employment country occurred rapidly between 1910 and 1940 (2) subsequent to 1940 there has been a gradual increase in adolescent employment. This study attempts to understand the causes of these phenomena. We argue that they reflect structural changes in the U.S. economy and the complementarity between adolescent labor and the evolving nature of production. Hence, our findings contrast sharply with the conventional wisdom on determinants of child labor in modern poor countries.*