

Migrating for Opportunity? Internal Migration and Economic Advancement

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INTRODUCTION

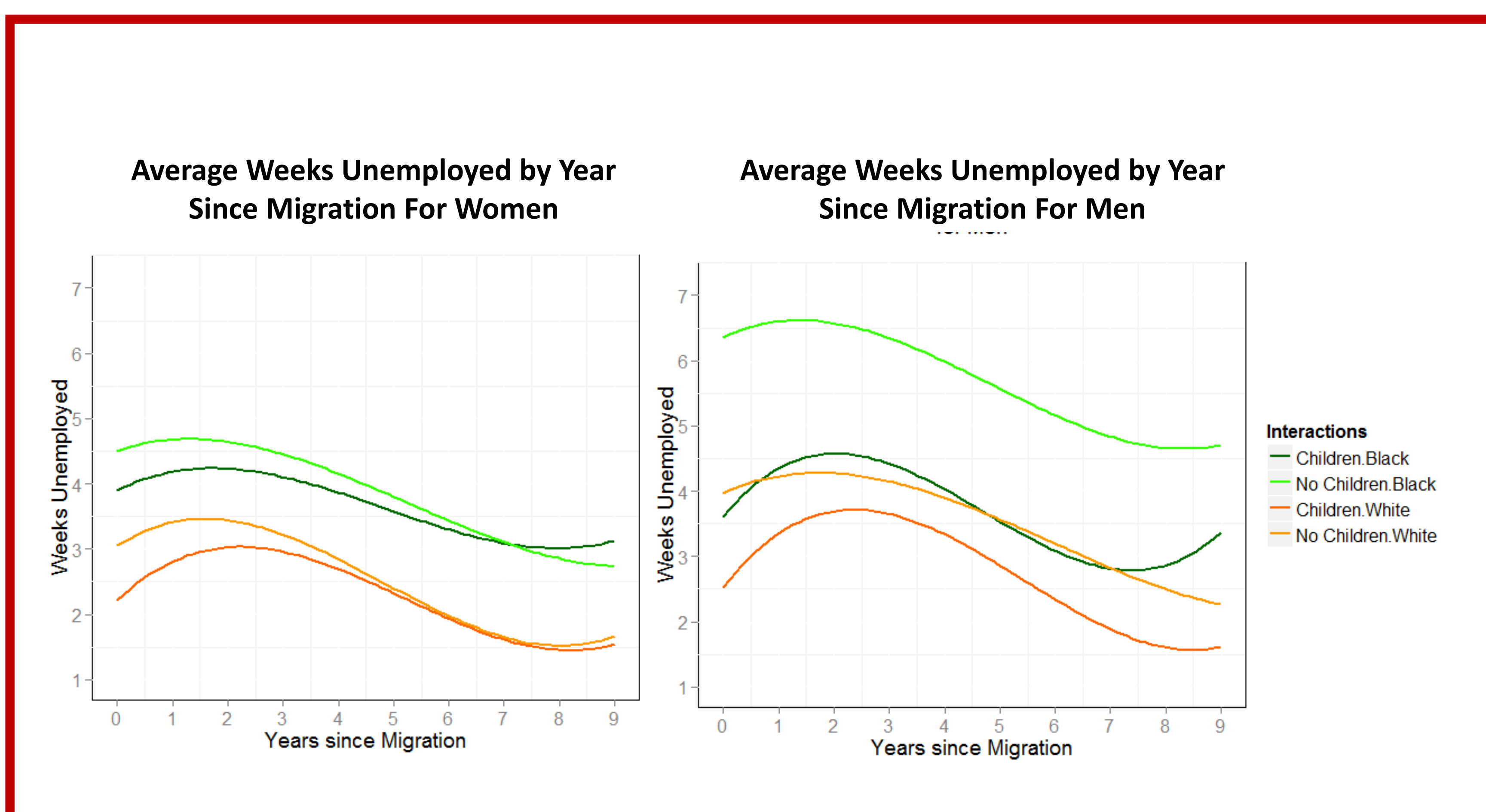
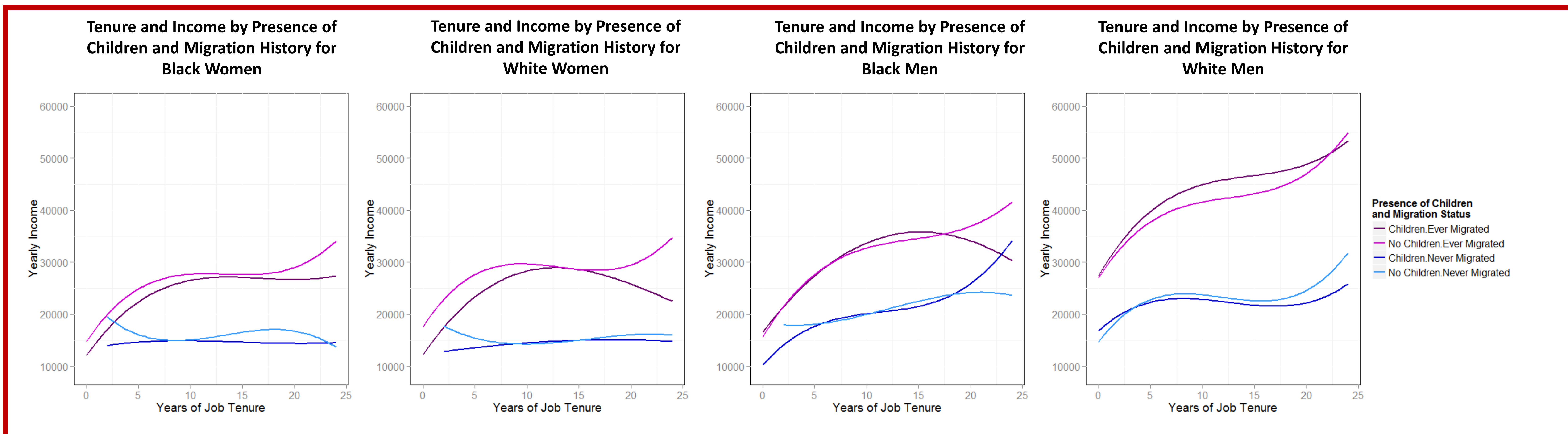
The current literature on U.S internal migration has shown that migration tends to be associated with gains in income for white men and declines in income for white women, particularly those with children. But we have little knowledge of how these processes influence the economic advancement of migrants of other races. Using NLSY79 data from 1979-2012 I investigate the following questions:

- Is migration associated with changes in income and/or changes in the length of unemployment spells, and do these changes persist over time for men and women once a variety of relevant characteristics are accounted for?
- Are these relationships similar for Black and White men and women?
- Does the presence of children influence these relationships similarly for Black and White women and men?
- What is migration's role in in/decreasing racial disparities in outcomes?

METHODS

- Utilize NLSY79 data from 1979-2012
- Outcome variables:
 - Individual yearly income (calculated from adjusted wages*hours worked*weeks worked)
 - Number of weeks unemployed
- Focal independent variables: job tenure (in years), county migration, years since the first county migration experience
- Control variables: Average income growth for up to 3 years prior to the observation period, age, age-squared, marital status, presence of children, educational attainment, work hours, military status, urban residence, and residence in the North, West, or Southern United States
- Utilized fixed effects regressions and multilevel regressions
- Separately examined men and women, in some cases, sample subsetted by race
- Created predicted values from interactions between tenure (or years since migration), presence of children, and race

	N	Avg. Obs Per Person	% Migrated	% Person Years with No Children	Average Yearly Income	Average Weeks Unemployed/year
Black women	1,482	14.5	8.71%	37%	\$15,995	3.7
White women	3,514	13	12.24%	50%	\$17,154	2.01
Black men	1,550	14.2	10.45%	68.04%	\$22,026	4.76
White men	3,606	13.1	12.9%	61%	\$29,733	2.72



CONCLUSIONS

- County migration is associated with increases in income for men and women with and without children and relatively small bumps in weeks unemployed (with spells of unemployment steadily declining in length over time).
- However, migrating men (particularly white men) experience steeper income growth over time, potentially exacerbating race/gender wage gaps. Women with children experience shallow or negative income growth after 10 years of tenure.
- Black men without children and women who do not migrate experience very little income growth as job tenure increases
- With the exception of white men, having children is generally associated with shallower income growth over time.

