

The College Spike in Poverty

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Paper Abstract:

Poverty is examined over the age distribution for the United States, with specific attention paid to the increased poverty among college-age individuals and how this coincides with decreased poverty among older retired individuals. The aggregate poverty data contain 80 years of age (0-79), over 28 years (1987-2014), with 22 constructed 5-year birth cohorts (1908-2014). An age-cohort year decomposition analysis with this data finds significant spikes in poverty at college and pre-retirement ages, that younger birth cohorts are relatively worse off than older birth cohorts, and that poverty rates move counter-cyclically.