

# **An anthropometric study of the standard of living and degree of marginality in Ontario and Quebec, 1870-1900**

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## **Abstract**

This paper investigates the relationship between average height with standard of living and variability in stature with marginality in Canada's two largest provinces while the country was experiencing pronounced industrialization from 1870-1900. The analysis shows that Ontario experienced a higher standard of living as its distribution of heights was entirely to the right of Quebec's. Inequality was slightly higher in Ontario, but Montreal experienced the highest rates of marginality. There was a lot of inequality in Ontario's lower social classes while most of Quebec's inequality originated from its highest social classes. A cohort analysis reveals that the standard of living in both provinces decreased over the three decades analyzed. Meanwhile, inequality in the provinces heightened from 1870-85 but began to decline afterwards. Finally, a Blinder-Oaxaca decomposition reveals that only a small percentage of the height differential between Ontario and Quebec can be accounted for by characteristics found in the dataset.

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