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consistent with simple models of labor supply and demand. However, antebellum development did produce a widening differential in wages between white-collar labor and other occupations, and a persistent gap in wages of common labor emerged between the South and the North.

Wages and Labor Markets in the United States, 1820–1860 makes a significant contribution to economic history by presenting a vast amount of previously unexamined data to advance the understanding of the history of wages and labor markets in the antebellum economy.



ROBERT A. MARGO is professor of economics at Vanderbilt University and a research associate of the National Bureau of Economic Research.

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