

## JANE LEBER HERR

*Curriculum Vitae*

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Harris School of Public Policy Studies  
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### PROFESSIONAL POSITIONS:

- 2009- Postdoctoral Scholar, Center for Human Potential and Public Policy,  
Harris School of Public Policy Studies, University of Chicago
- 2010- Postdoctoral Research Associate, Population Research Center, University of Chicago
- 2010 Visiting Postdoctoral Scholar, National Poverty Center,  
(April) Gerald R. Ford School of Public Policy, University of Michigan

### EDUCATION:

- 2008 University of California Berkeley, Berkeley, CA  
Ph.D., Economics  
Dissertation: "Fertility Effects on Women's Career Paths"  
Advisors: David Card and Ronald Lee
- 2000 Goldman School of Public Policy, University of California Berkeley, Berkeley, CA  
M.P.P.
- 1995 Harvard University, Cambridge, MA  
A.B. with Honors, Chemistry

### FIELDS OF INTEREST:

Economic Demography  
Labor Economics  
Public Policy

### FELLOWSHIPS AND AWARDS:

- 2008 Outstanding Graduate Student Instructor Award
- 2005 National Institute of Child Health and Human Development Fellowship
- 2004 Participant, 1st Lindau Meeting of the Winners of the Economics Nobel Prize
- 2002 Workshop in Applied Economics, Social Science Research Council
- 2001-03 National Institute of Child Health and Human Development Fellowship
- 1998-2000 Richard & Rhoda Goldman Fellowship

### PUBLICATIONS:

**Work Environment and "Opt-Out" Rates at Motherhood Across High-Education Career Paths**  
(with Catherine Wolfram)

Accepted at *Industrial and Labor Relations Review*

Featured in *Business Week*, *Reuters*, *The Washington Post*, *The Huffington Post*, Fox Business News' *Tom Sullivan Show*, National Center for Policy Analysis "Daily Policy Digest", VoxEU.org.

**Implementing Matching Estimators for Average Treatment Effects in Stata**, Abadie, A., Drukker, D., Herr, J.L., Imbens, G.W. *The Stata Journal*, 4(3), (2004).

**Teacher Salaries in California**, with Kim S. Reuben, Chapter 5 in *School Finance and California's Master Plan for Education*, John Sonstelie and Peter Richardson, ed., Public Policy Institute of California (2001).

## **WORKING PAPERS:**

### **Measuring the Effect of the Timing of First Birth [Job Market Paper]**

*Under review*

The existing literature on the effect of the timing of first birth on women's wages generally concludes that there is a benefit to fertility delay, but one that is overstated by the raw correlation. In this paper I reconsider this question, but begin by diverging from the literature to redefine "timing" in terms of a woman's entry into the labor force, rather than her age. When one considers the mechanisms by which fertility timing may affect a woman's wage path, it is clear that each turns on her experience level at first birth, not her age. This transformation also reveals the important distinction between women who have their first child after they enter the labor market versus before. Applying this measure to women from the 1979 cohort of the National Longitudinal Survey of Youth, I show the following. First, when measured correctly, there is little bias captured in the correlation between first-birth timing and wages. Second, the existing literature's focus on age has produced confused inference that has obscured the magnitude, and for some the *sign*, of the link between fertility timing and wages. In particular, estimates based on age at first birth understate the return to delay for women who remain childless at labor market entry. But more importantly, these positive estimates obscure the *negative* return to delay - to having a first birth after labor market entry, rather than before - for the majority of all but college graduates.

### **Decomposing the Effect of First Birth Timing on Women's Wage Growth**

I decompose the effect of the timing of a woman's first birth on her wage growth to establish the mechanism by which fertility timing affects wages. In previous work (Herr, 2011) I find that for a woman with a first birth after labor market entry, a one-year delay increases her wage growth over the first 20 years of her career by 2 to 3 percent. In this paper I assess the mechanism by which timing affects wages by considering its intermediate effect on factors central to wage growth. I find that the two most important economic channels speak to the influence of timing on the pattern of human capital accumulation: hours worked and the length of the longest labor force exit. I also find that their relative importance varies by education and timing. For those with less than a college degree at labor market entry, the influence of fertility delay arises most strongly from its effect on hours worked (the accumulation of general human capital on the job). For college graduates, while the influence of fertility delay initially arises from its effect on decreasing time off from work (protecting human capital from depreciation), by later stages the more relevant channel is through hours worked (or total human capital accumulation).

### **Gauging the Randomness of Contraceptive Failures**

Using data from the 1979 and 1997 cohorts of the National Longitudinal Surveys of Youth, I assess the relationship between ability and the incidence of having a first birth conceived via a contraceptive failure. To do so I focus on the proximate determinants of conceiving via contraceptive failure (contraceptive use, quality, frequency of sexual intercourse, and the length of exposure to an unplanned pregnancy), as well as the probability that such a conception goes to term. In the population overall, I find that the incidence of a first birth conceived via a contraceptive failure rises over the first half to two-thirds of the ability distribution, after which the incidence begins to fall. I then focus on how this relationship acts through the link between ability and each proximate determinant.

### **Do Agents Place too Much Weight on Recent Information? Or – More Particularly – do General Managers? (new draft in progress with David Owens)**

Using data from Major League Baseball's free agent market, I test whether teams place too much weight on recent information in choosing their willingness to pay for a player. In particular, comparing pre- and post-free agency playing statistics, I consider whether the link between free agency salary and previous performance is overly weighted towards recent results. I also test whether the strength of this relationship varies by whether the most recent year's performance represents a better- or worse-than expected outcome. I find that teams irrationally overvalue recent information, but only in response to bad news.

## **OTHER PROJECTS IN PROGRESS:**

### **The Shifting Age Distribution at First Birth: The Influence of Own- and Partner-Economic Opportunities**

### **Changing Norms or Adjustable Production Functions? The Case of Family-Friendly Work Schedules Among MDs, with Colleen Flaherty Manchester**

**PRESENTATIONS (past or scheduled):**

- 2011 Mount Holyoke College (invited speaker); Population Association of America Annual Conference; Bureau of Labor Statistics; Society of Labor Economists Annual Conference; Federal Reserve Bank of Chicago
- 2010 University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign, Labor Economics/School of Labor and Employment Relations Seminar; University of Michigan, Labor Lunch Series; University of Chicago, Social Policy and Family Influences on Children Symposium
- 2009 Association for Public Policy Analysis and Management Annual Meeting
- 2008 Association for Public Policy Analysis and Management Annual Meeting
- 2005 XIX Annual Conference of the European Society for Population Economics

**TEACHING EXPERIENCE:**

- 2011 Faculty Instructor, Harris School of Public Policy Studies, University of Chicago:  
*Economic Demography and Public Policy*
- 2007 Teaching Assistant, Haas School of Business, U.C. Berkeley:  
*Microeconomic Analysis for Business Decisions*
- 2007 Teaching Assistant, Economics Department, U.C. Berkeley: *Economic Demography*
- 2001 Teaching Assistant, Goldman School of Public Policy, U.C. Berkeley:  
*Economics of Public Policy*

**OTHER PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE:**

- 2003-05 Research assistant to Professor Guido Imbens, Department of Economics, U.C. Berkeley
- (i) Wrote Stata program to compute the matching estimator of average treatment effects developed by Professor Imbens and Professor Alberto Abadie (Kennedy School of Government, Harvard).
  - (ii) Edited *Causal Inference in Statistics and the Social Sciences*, a textbook being written by Professor Imbens and Professor Don Rubin (Department of Statistics, Harvard).
- 2003 Research Assistant to Professor Ken Chay, Department of Economics, U.C. Berkeley  
Assessed the structure of U.S. environmental policies and their potential variable effect across the income distribution.
- 2000 Research Intern, Public Policy Institute of California, San Francisco, CA  
Studied how California's teacher shortage compares across primary and secondary schools, and modeled how this shortage would respond to teacher salary increases.
- 1999 Summer Associate, Analysis Group/Economics, San Francisco, CA  
For several Fortune 500 utility corporations, estimated the magnitude of potential stranded costs associated with the deregulation of the utility industries in several states.
- 1998 Associate, Industrial Economics, Inc., San Francisco, CA  
Estimated the economic impact of a one-meter sea level rise in the State of California due to global climate change.
- 1996-98 Consultant, Arthur Andersen, LLP, Environmental Services Group, San Francisco, CA  
Work included evaluating a Fortune 500 conglomerate's environmental cost-drivers associated with its manufacturing activities, and developing estimated future environmental remediation cost estimates for several U.S. oil and gas companies as litigation support in environmental insurance cost recovery efforts.
- 1995-96 Research Associate, Industrial Economics, Inc., Cambridge, MA  
Conducted environmental public policy analysis for the Environmental Protection Agency and the U.S. Department of the Interior, including conducting a natural resources damage assessment of a major northeastern river system contaminated with PCBs.

**AFFILIATIONS:** American Economic Association  
Committee on the Status of Women in the Economics Profession (CSWEP)  
Population Association of America  
Society of Labor Economists  
Association for Public Policy Analysis and Management

**REFEREE:** *American Economic Review*  
*Quarterly Journal of Economics*  
*American Economic Journal: Economic Policy*  
*Journal of the European Economic Association*  
*Labour Economics*  
National Science Foundation  
Social Science and Humanities Research Council of Canada  
The Sloan Foundation