

## An Economist's View

Jason M. Lindo

Georgia Institute of Technology

National Bureau of Economic Research

*National Academies' Workshop to Explore Data Needs in the Wake of  
the Dobbs v. Jackson Women's Health Organization Decision*

# Economic Approaches

# Economic Approaches

**Theory:** consider how incentives, costs, and constraints affect outcomes

# Economic Approaches

**Theory:** consider how incentives, costs, and constraints affect outcomes

**Empirical Research:** obsession with quantifying *causal* effects

# Economic Approaches

**Theory:** consider how incentives, costs, and constraints affect outcomes

**Empirical Research:** obsession with quantifying *causal* effects

**Questions:** *Very* wide ranging, including health care utilization, health outcomes, family dynamics, education, and of course things like poverty, income, employment, inequality, etc.

# Quantifying Causal Effects

# Quantifying Causal Effects

Evaluate “natural experiments” in which institutions, policymakers, or other forces have generated an “experiment” we can learn from

# Quantifying Causal Effects

Evaluate “natural experiments” in which institutions, policymakers, or other forces have generated an “experiment” we can learn from

Focus on trying to identify a counterfactual. What would have happened if circumstances had been different?



# Quantifying Causal Effects

Evaluate “natural experiments” in which institutions, policymakers, or other forces have generated an “experiment” we can learn from

Focus on trying to identify a counterfactual. What would have happened if circumstances had been different?

Typically using methods associated with the 2021 Nobel Prize in economics and cutting-edge refinements to those methods

# Causal effects of the Dobbs decision

# Causal effects of the Dobbs decision

On areas where abortion has been banned and people living there

# Causal effects of the Dobbs decision

On areas where abortion has been banned and people living there

On other areas and people living there

# Causal effects of the Dobbs decision

On areas where abortion has been banned and people living there

On other areas and people living there

Effects of responses to the decision

# Causal effects of the Dobbs decision

On areas where abortion has been banned and people living there

On other areas and people living there

Effects of responses to the decision

Effects on effects of other things (e.g., contraception access, poverty relief)

# Causal effects of abortion access on economic outcomes

# Causal effects of abortion access on economic outcomes

Bans on abortion from 1960s reduced educational attainment, particularly for Black women (Angrist and Evans 2000, Lindo et al. 2020, and Jones 2021)



# Causal effects of abortion access on economic outcomes

Bans on abortion from 1960s reduced educational attainment, particularly for Black women (Angrist and Evans 2000, Lindo et al. 2020, and Jones 2021)

TRAP laws impairing access in more recent years reduced educational attainment, particularly for Black women (Jones and Pineda-Torres 2021)

# Causal effects of abortion access on economic outcomes

Bans on abortion from 1960s reduced educational attainment, particularly for Black women (Angrist and Evans 2000, Lindo et al. 2020, and Jones 2021)

TRAP laws impairing access in more recent years reduced educational attainment, particularly for Black women (Jones and Pineda-Torres 2021)

Being denied an abortion due to a providers gestational age cutoff increases financial distress for at least five years (Miller et al. 2021)

# Causal effects of abortion access on economic outcomes

Bans on abortion from 1960s reduced educational attainment, particularly for Black women (Angrist and Evans 2000, Lindo et al. 2020, and Jones 2021)

TRAP laws impairing access in more recent years reduced educational attainment, particularly for Black women (Jones and Pineda-Torres 2021)

Being denied an abortion due to a providers gestational age cutoff increases financial distress for at least five years (Miller et al. 2021)

Consistent with other strands of economics research documenting economically detrimental effects of childbearing

# Causal effects of abortion access on economic outcomes

Bans on abortion from 1960s reduced educational attainment, particularly for Black women (Angrist and Evans 2000, Lindo et al. 2020, and Jones 2021)

TRAP laws impairing access in more recent years reduced educational attainment, particularly for Black women (Jones and Pineda-Torres 2021)

Being denied an abortion due to a providers gestational age cutoff increases financial distress for at least five years (Miller et al. 2021)

Consistent with other strands of economics research documenting economically detrimental effects of childbearing

Implications for the resources available to children

Knowledge economists often lack

# Knowledge economists often lack

What “natural experiments” or “natural experiments within natural experiments” are occurring

# Knowledge economists often lack

What “natural experiments” or “natural experiments within natural experiments” are occurring

Where, how, and for whom do we expect to be affected

## Knowledge economists often lack

What “natural experiments” or “natural experiments within natural experiments” are occurring

Where, how, and for whom do we expect to be affected

What questions we should be asking