

Second Writing Assignment
Due: Thursday, March 20, 2008

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Spring 2008

For the past couple of weeks, we have been reading examples of how economists use real-world or natural experiments to test various hypotheses. Listed below are about a dozen articles that are examples of this type of research. For this assignment, you are to select two of these papers and for each paper, write a 2 to 3 page *precis* (double spaced, 12 point font, 1 inch margins) that summarizes the question, methodology, and results in the paper. Within your *precis*, you must address the following questions:

- Outline the question the authors are trying to address
- Summarize why previous efforts were unable to satisfactorily answer the question
- Outline the empirical methodology the authors use to answer the question
- Briefly describe the data used by the authors
- Summarize the results
- Discuss the limitations to the author's empirical methodology

You are not restricted to the following articles so if you want to use another article, send me a citation to the article and I will OK it ahead of time. Also, if you would like an article on a particular topic (environmental economics, economics of crime, development, etc.) please let me know and I will help find one for you.

Suggested articles

Almond, D., K. Chay, D. Lee, "The Costs of Low Birth Weight," *Quarterly Journal of Economics*, 120, 2005, 1031-1084. (Through page 1063 only)

Angrist, Joshua D., Victor Lavy, Using Maimonides' Rule to Estimate the Effect of Class Size on Scholastic Achievement, *The Quarterly Journal of Economics*, Vol. 114, No. 2. (May, 1999), pp. 533-575

Angrist, Joshua D., Victor Lavy and Analia Schlosser, "New Evidence on the Causal Link Between Quantity and Quality of Children," *NBER Working Paper* # 11835, December 2005.

Black, Sandra, "Do Better Schools Matter? Parental Valuation of Elementary Education, *The Quarterly Journal of Economics*, Vol. 114, No. 2. (May, 1999), pp. 577-599.

Black, Sandra, "The More the Merrier? The Effect of Family Size and Birth Order on Children's Education," *Quarterly Journal of Economics*, 120(2), 2005, 669-700.

Caceras-Delpiano, Julio, "The Impacts of Family Size on Investment in Child Quality," *Journal of Human Resources*, 41(4), 738-754.

Cristia, Julian, "The Effect of a First Child on Female Labor Supply: Evidence from Women Seeking Fertility Services," *Journal of Human Resources*, forthcoming.

Conley, Dalton and Rebecca Glauber, "Parental Educational Investment and Children's Academic Risk: Estimates of the Impact of Sibship Size and Birth Order from Exogenous Variation in Fertility," *Journal of Human Resources*, 41(4), 2006, 722-737.

Dee, Thomas, "Teachers, Race and Student Achievement in a Randomized Experiment," *Review of Economics and Statistics*, 86(1), 2004, 195-210.

Goldin, Claudia, Cecelia Rouse, "Orchestrating Impartiality: The Impact of Blind Auditions on Female Musicians," *American Economic Review*, 90(4), 2000, 715-741.

Imbens, Guido, et al., "Estimating the Effect of Unearned Income on Labor Earnings, Savings, and Consumption: Evidence from a Survey of Lottery Players," *American Economic Review*, 91(4), 2001, 778-794.

Lindahl, Mikael, "Estimating the Effect of Income on Health and Mortality using Lottery Prizes as an Exogenous Source of Variation in Income," *Journal of Human Resources*, 40(1), 2005, 144-168.