

Department of Economics
The University of Kansas
415 Snow Hall, 1460 Jayhawk Boulevard
Lawrence, KS 66045

Email: lilly.springer@ku.edu
Website: lillyspringer.com
Bluesky: @SpringerEcon
Citizenship: United States

EDUCATION

Ph.D. in Economics, University of Kansas

Expected 2026

Dissertation: *Essays on the Economics of Women's Reproductive Health*

Advisor: David Slusky

Committee: Donna Ginther, Misty Heggeness, Anupam B. Jena, & Aimee Wilson

M.A. in Economics, University of Kansas

2023

B.A. in Economics, Butler University, Summa Cum Laude

2021

Highest Distinction in Economics

Honors Thesis: *Critic's Pick or Social Media Smash: A Study on the Relationship Between Newspaper Reviews, Social Media Followers, and a Broadway Show's Economic Success*

Advisor: Kathy Paulson Gjerde

RESEARCH INTERESTS

Health Economics, Family Economics, Labor Economics, Applied Microeconomics

JOURNAL ARTICLES

"Nurse Practitioner Scope of Practice Law and Safety Net Participation: Evidence from WIC" (with Owen Fleming) (Forthcoming) **Contemporary Economic Policy** [\[link\]](#)

"Critics' Pick or Social Media Smash: The Effect of Critics' Reviews on Social Media and Broadway" (with Kathy Paulson Gjerde) (2024), **Applied Economics Letters**, 32(13), 1933–1940. [\[link\]](#)

JOB MARKET PAPER

"Driving the Distance: How Abortion Access Affects Infant and Maternal Health" [\[link\]](#)

Abstract: Abortion clinic closures lower abortion rates and raise birth rates, in part by increasing the continuation of high-risk, non-viable, and unintended pregnancies. But do these shifts have downstream effects on infant and maternal health? Using 2009-2019 U.S. national vital statistics and facility data from the Myers Abortion Facility Database, I find that a 100-mile increase in driving distance to the nearest abortion provider leads to a 5% increase in deliveries past 42 weeks of gestation, a 2% increase in high birth weight, and a 21% rise in congenital heart disease. Additionally, fetal and infant mortality due to developmental complications increase by 28% and 23%, respectively, and infant mortality due to premature delivery increases by 11%. Except for an increase in vaginal tearing, I find no discernible effect on individual measures of maternal health. My results suggest that if all counties were within 50 miles of an abortion provider, approximately 793 fetal and 646 infant deaths could have been prevented.

WORKING PAPERS

"Occupational Hazard: An Analysis of Birth Outcomes Among Physician Mothers" (with Anupam B. Jena & David Slusky) [\[link\]](#)

NBER Working Paper No. 31955

Revise and Resubmit at Journal of Public Economics

Abstract: The long, physically demanding hours that physicians, particularly surgeons, work during their training could impact physician mothers' birth outcomes. Using Texas birth data from 2007-2014, we compared birth outcomes between physicians and lawyers and between surgeons and non-surgeon physicians. We then examine whether the 2011 duty hour reform, which lowered trainee work hours, impacted those birth outcomes. We find that physicians have an increased incidence of having low birth weight and small for gestational age infants, with the results driven by surgeons. In addition, we find that the duty hour reform was associated with reduction in the incidence of small for gestational age infants for younger physicians.

"Downstream Effects of Post-Dobbs Abortion Bans: Birth Rates and WIC" [\[link\]](#)

Accepted at Economic Inquiry

Abstract: Abortion bans tend to impact the cohorts of women that are eligible for the supplemental nutrition program WIC the most. I use synthetic difference-in-differences models and 2017-2023 monthly state-level data to estimate if states with total abortion bans experience a change in birth rates and WIC participation. States that implemented total abortion bans by the start of 2023 experience a 2% increase in the overall birth rate in the first 6 months of the year and a 2.1% and 4.2% increase in monthly infant and postpartum women WIC participation respectively, leading to a total additional \$8.9 million in food costs.

"Zoom Meetings and Midnight Feedings: Labor Market Change Among Parents of Infants" (with Misty Heggeness & Yurong Zhang) [\[link\]](#)

Abstract: Raising children is time and resource intensive and, on average, disproportionately influences the daily lives of women. This study builds on already existing evidence showing that, in a society where women are increasingly high-skilled and educated, more flexibility in the timing and location of work increases women's attachment to the labor market. Recent fertility studies have shown a decrease in age at first birth and an increase in births among highly educated women potentially driven by increased work flexibility in white collar jobs. Using a two-year panel from the Current Population Survey, we focus on women who gave birth within the year prior to March 2020 to examine how infant parents shifted labor market behavior after March 2020. We find that highly educated mothers substituted labor market exits, staying in the labor market and increasing leave from work. Fathers substituted increased leave for work time. The ripple effects of this phenomenon on long-term parent-child attachment, as well as child and parent outcomes, should continue to be studied in the future.

WORKS IN PROGRESS

"The Financial Fallout of the 2022 Abortion Ban for Children" (with Yurong Zhang)

TECHNICAL REPORTS AND POLICY BRIEFS

"The Economics of Child Care Licensing in Kansas" (with Misty Heggeness & Jennifer Babitzke), United Women's Empowerment, 2024

TEACHING EXPERIENCE

The University of Kansas

Lead Instructor

Health Economics (ECON 564)

Principles of Macroeconomics (ECON 144)

Spring 2024, Spring 2025

Summer 2023

Graduate Teaching Assistant

Principles of Microeconomics (ECON 142)
Principles of Macroeconomics (ECON 144)
Head Graduate Teaching Assistant (ECON 142/144)

Fall 2022, Spring 2023
Fall 2022, Spring 2023, Fall 2024
Spring 2023

Guest Lecturer

Labor Economics (ECON 641)
Gender, Public Policy, and the Economy (ECON 310/780)
Health Economics (ECON 919)

Butler University

Economics Tutor

Fall 2019-Spring 2021

HONORS, AWARDS, AND FELLOWSHIPS

The University of Kansas

Outstanding Student Instructor Award	2025
Madison and Lila Self Graduate Fellowship (\$225,000 value)	2021-2025
Institute for Policy & Social Research Fellowship	2024-2025
Passed Ph.D. Oral Comprehensive Exam with Honors	2024
R.S. Howey Award (Top Performance on Qualifying Exams)	2022

Butler University

Charles O. McGaughey Economics Leadership Award	2020
W & J Sellick & Bloomberg Business Scholarship	2017

CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS

2025: Atlanta Workshop on Public Policy and Child Well-being, Midwest Economics Association, Economic Demography Workshop, Kansas Health Economics Conference, American-European Health Economics Study Group – IX Edition, ASHEcon Annual Meeting, Missouri Valley Economics Association, Association for Public Policy and Management, Southern Economic Association

2024: Population Association of America, Society of Labor Economists, NBER Children Program Meeting, SGF Sorbonne University Research Presentation*, ASHEcon Annual Meeting, NBER Summer Institute – Gender in the Economy, 3rd Annual UNL-KState-KU-Mizzou Microeconomics Research Day, Midwest Health Economics Conference, Missouri Valley Economic Association, Association for Public Policy and Management, Southern Economic Association, SGF Annual Poster Session*

2023: Missouri Valley Economic Association, SGF Annual Poster Session*

* denotes poster presentation

SEMINAR PRESENTATIONS

2025: USDA Economic Research Service, University of Wisconsin-Madison Reproductive Equity Action Lab, Kansas State University, UMKC Bloch School of Management

2023: University of Kansas Department of Economics

PROFESSIONAL MEMBERSHIPS

American Economic Association, American Society of Health Economists, Association for Public Policy Analysis and Management

REFEREE EXPERIENCE

Journal of Policy Analysis and Management (2)
Applied Economics
American Journal of Preventive Medicine
Demography
Journal of Cultural Economics

OTHER PROFESSIONAL SERVICE

University of Kansas

Organizer of KU Economics Research Brown Bag Series	2024-2025
Kansas Health Economics Referee Committee	2024-2025
KU Taylor Swift Seminar Committee	2024
Co-Organizer of 3rd Annual KU-UNL-KState-Mizzou Applied Microeconomics Research Day	2024
Economics Graduate Student Representative	2023-2024

PUBLIC WRITING

“What Impact Has Repealing Roe v. Wade Had So Far?” February 11, 2025, Econofact
“Occupational Hazard? Birth Outcomes Among Physician Mothers,” January 30, 2024, Econofact

SKILLS

Programming: L^AT_EX(proficient), Stata (proficient), R (beginner)

OTHER EMPLOYMENT

Research Assistant to David Slusky, University of Kansas	2021-Present
Research Assistant to Misty Heggeness, University of Kansas	Fall 2023, Summer 2024
Research Intern, EMILY’s List, Washington D.C.	2020
Research Assistant to William Rieber, Butler University	2019-2020

REFERENCES

David Slusky

Professor, Department of Economics
University of Kansas
david.slusky@ku.edu

Misty Heggeness

Associate Professor, School of Public Affairs and Administration
University Kansas
misty.heggeness@ku.edu

Anupam B. Jena

Joseph P Newhouse Professor of Health Care Policy, Department of Health Care Policy
Harvard Medical School
jena@hcp.med.harvard.edu