

J PETER NILSSON

NOVEMBER, 2009

DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMICS, UPPSALA UNIVERSITY AND
IFAU – INSTITUTE FOR LABOR MARKET POLICY EVALUATION

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Personal Information: born August 5th 1979, Swedish citizen

Education:

MA (Economics and Statistics), Uppsala University 2005

Doctoral Studies:

Uppsala University, Fall 2005 to present
Dissertation: Essays on Social Interactions and the Long-term Effects of Early-life Conditions
Expected completion date: December 11th 2009

Visiting Scholar, Columbia University, fall 2008

Research Fields:

Labor and Health Economics, Applied Econometrics, Public Policy Evaluation

References:

Professor Janet Currie
Department of Economics,
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Professor Per-Anders Edin
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Professor Per Johansson
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Scholarships and Awards:

- 2009 Invited to the European Winter Meeting of the Econometric Society for “the most promising young European researchers” (18 participants)
- 2008-2009 Full scholarship for doctoral studies abroad awarded by the Jan Wallander and Tom Hedelius Foundation (\$43,000), December 2007

Presentations:

Invited seminars: NBER, Childrens program meeting, Cambridge, MA, (May 2008); European Economic Association annual meeting, Milan (August 2008); University College London, (October 2008) IIES, Stockholm University, (March 2009); Conference on the influence of early life conditions, CMPO, Bristol, (October 2009); Presentation for the Board of the Uppsala University, (October 2009); European Winter Meeting of the Econometric Society, Budapest, (November 2009)

Conferences and workshops: European Economic Association annual meeting, Barcelona, (August 2009); Workshop on Economic Demography, Mölle, (May 2009); Marie Curie RTN Microdata Methods and Practice meeting, Institute for Fiscal studies, (March 2009); The Society of Labor economists (SOLE) 13th annual meeting, New York, (May 2008); STAKES, National Research and Development Centre for Welfare and Health, Finland, (November 2007); Department of Economics, Stockholm University, (October 2007); Workshop on Health and Human Capital, The Danish National Institute of Social Research, Copenhagen, (July 6-7, 2007); Marie Curie RTN Microdata Methods and Practice meeting, Paris School of Economics, Paris (13-16 June 2007); Department of Economics, Uppsala University, (May 5, 2007); 1st meeting of SUDSWec, Uppsala University, (May, 2006); Department of Economics, Uppsala University, (April, 2005).

Teaching experience:

- Spring 2010 Public Policy Evaluation, master course, Uppsala University, Lecturer
Fall 2007 Empirical methods in Economics, Uppsala University, Examining teacher
Spring 2007 Empirical methods in Economics, Uppsala University, TA
Fall 2006 Advisor for Thomas Olsson, master thesis, Uppsala University
Fall 2006 Co-examiner undergraduate level thesis work, Uppsala University
Spring 2005 Labor economics, Uppsala University, TA

Reviewer for:

Labour Economics, Scandinavian Journal of Economics

Committee work:

Member of the Board of Directories (regular) (2007), Department of Economics, Uppsala University.
Member of the Social sciences graduate students' council, Uppsala University, (2006), (deputy).

Other relevant work experiences:

Research assistant at Institute for labor market policy evaluation (IFAU), January-August 2005; Research assistant at The National Institute for Working Life, January-August 2003

Languages: Swedish (native), English (fluent), German (intermediate)

Publications in peer refereed journals:

- **Sick of Your Colleagues Absence?** (with P. Hesselius and P. Johansson)

Journal of the European Economic Association, April 2009, Vol. 7, No. 2-3

(Cited in *Handbook of Social Economics*, forthcoming, Elsevier press)

Abstract: We utilize a large-scale randomized social experiment to identify how co-workers affect each other's effort as measured by work absence. The experiment altered the work absence incentives for half of *all* employees living in Göteborg, Sweden. Using administrative data we are able to recover the treatment status of all workers in more than 3,000 workplaces. We first document that employees in workplaces with a high proportion of treated co-workers increase their own absence level significantly. We then examine the heterogeneity of the treatment effect in order to explore what mechanisms are underlying the peer effect. Although a strong effect of having a high proportion of treated co-workers is found for the non-treated workers, no significant effects are found for the treated workers. These results suggest that pure altruistic social preferences can be ruled out as the main motivator for the behavior of a non-negligible proportion of the employees in our sample.

Work in progress:

- **“The Long-term Effects of Early Childhood Lead Exposure: Evidence from the Phase-out of Leaded Gasoline” (Job Market Paper),**

(Cited in *Handbook of Labor Economics* vol. 4, forthcoming, Elsevier press)

Abstract: From the late 1970s through mid 1990s blood-lead levels decreased drastically in Swedish children due to the sharp phase-out of leaded gasoline. Exploiting the distinct geographical variation in early childhood lead exposure induced by the regulations together with micro data on all children in nine birth cohorts I show that reduced lead exposure early in life improves scholastic performance, cognitive ability, and labor market outcomes among young adults. At the relatively low levels of exposure considered, the analysis reveals a nonlinear relationship between local air lead levels in early childhood and adult outcomes, indicating the existence of a threshold below which further reductions no longer improve adult outcomes. Importantly, the effect is greater for children of lower socioeconomic status (SES), suggesting that pollution is one mechanism through which SES affects long-term economic outcomes and that environmental policies potentially can reduce the intergenerational correlation in economic outcomes.

- **“Does a Pint a Day Affect Your Childs’ Pay? Unintended and Permanent Consequences of a Temporary Alcohol Policy Experiment”** (Presented at the NBER Childrens program meeting)

Abstract: During a policy experiment in two Swedish regions in 1967 alcohol availability increased sharply, particularly for people under age 21. The policy experiment was abruptly ended after only 8.5 months due to a sharp increase in alcohol consumption. I exploit the distinct temporal, spatial and age-specific changes in alcohol availability induced by the policy experiment to estimate the long-term effects on those exposed to it *in utero*. I find that children *in utero* during the short period of increased alcohol availability have significantly lower educational attainments, earnings and increased welfare dependency rates at age 30 in comparison with the surrounding cohorts. Any direct effects of the increased availability on birth-cohort composition (e.g. through an increase in unplanned pregnancies) are not driving the results as the richness of the data allows for a focus on exposed children conceived before the policy experiment started. The results provide compelling evidence that investments in early-life health can yield large effects on outcomes later on in life.

- **“Businesses, Buddies and Babies: Social Interactions and Fertility at Work” (with L. Hensvik)**

Abstract: We examine the influence that co-workers’ have on each other’s fertility decisions. Using linked employer-employee panel data for Sweden we show that female individual fertility increases if a co-worker recently had a child. The timing of births among co-workers of the same sex, educational level and co-workers who are close in age are even more influential. Consistent with models of social learning we find that the peer effect for first time mothers is similar irrespective of the birth order of the co-worker’s child, while for higher order births within-parity peer effects are strong but cross-parity peer effects are entirely absent. A causal interpretation of our estimates is strengthened by several falsification tests showing that neither unobserved common shocks at the workplace level, nor sorting of workers between workplaces are likely to explain the observed peer effect. We also provide evidence suggesting that peers not only affect timing of births but potentially also completed fertility, and that fertility peer influences spills over across multiple networks. Our results suggest that social interactions could be an important factor behind the strong inter-temporal fluctuations in total fertility rates observed in many countries.