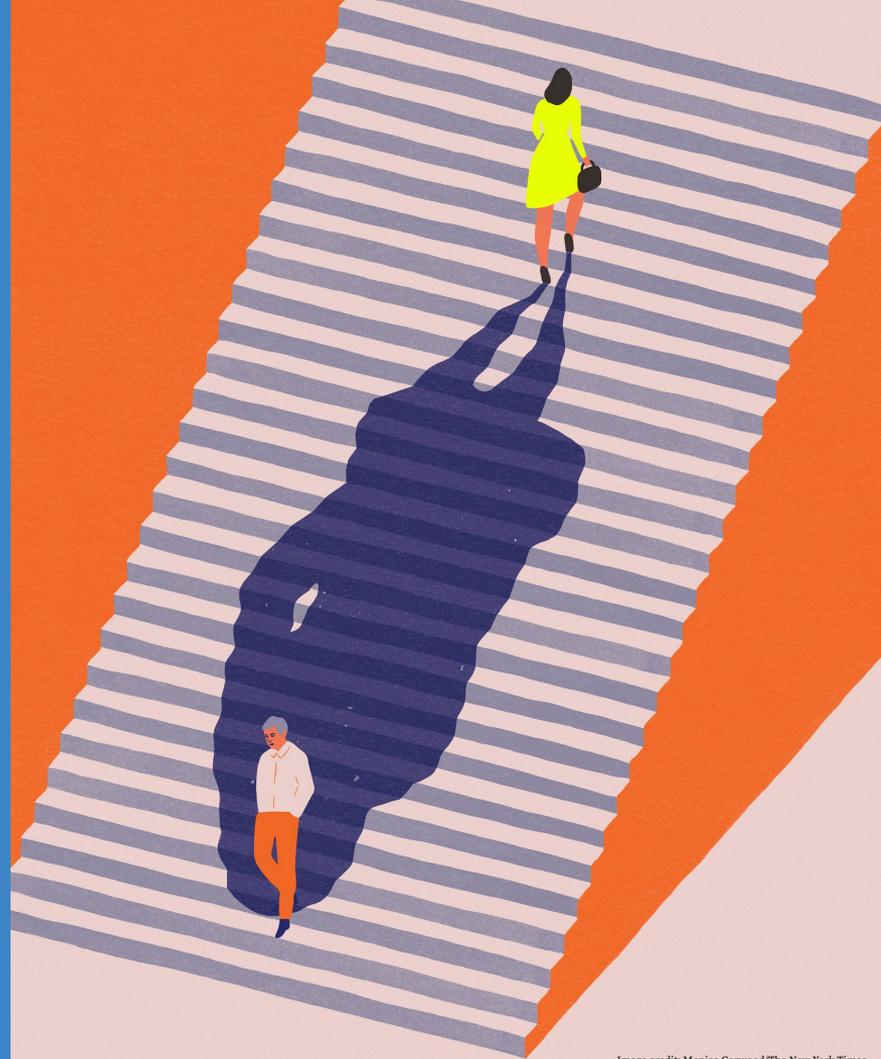


Bringing the Breadwinner Back In:

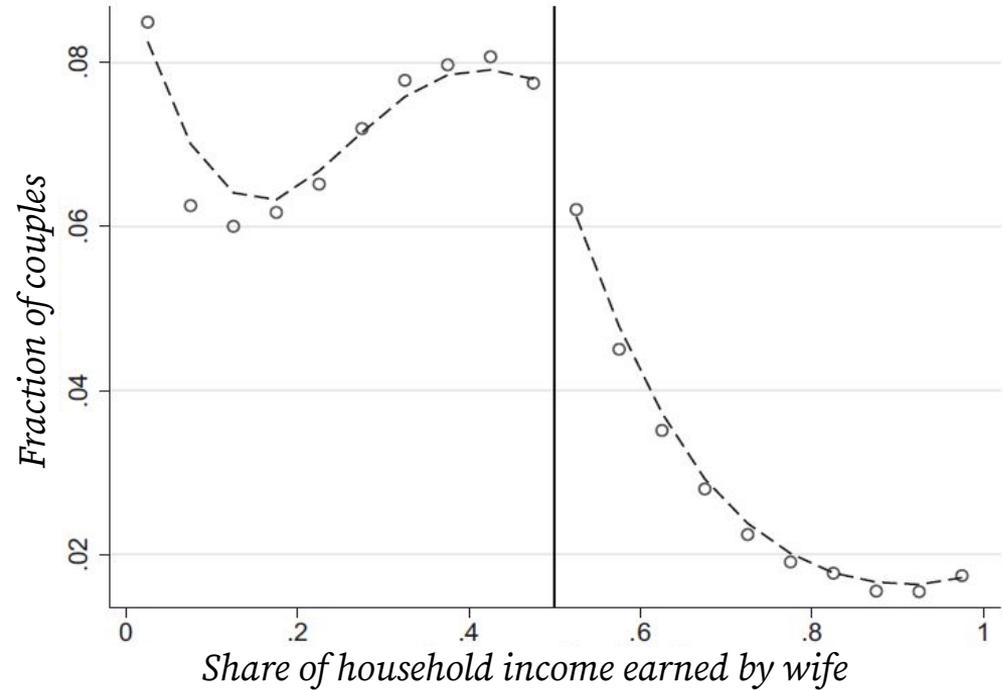
*Relative Wages and
Diseases of Despair*

Avra Janz



Motivation

Fig. 1: Distribution of Income Between Partners in Heterosexual, Married Couples

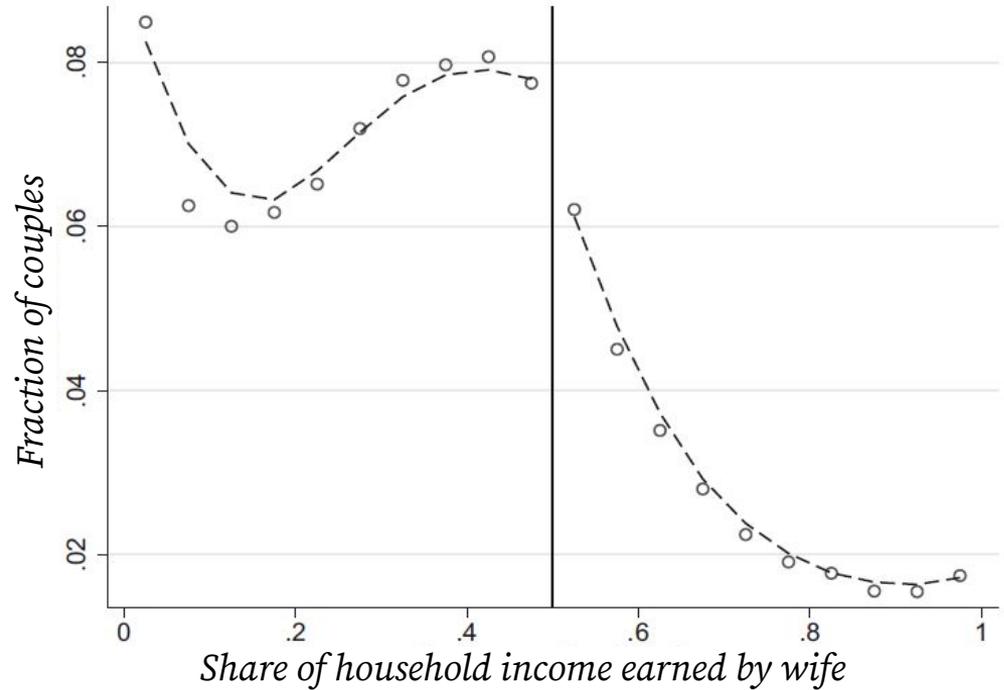


Adapted from: Bertrand, M., Kamenica, E., & Pan, J. (2015). Gender Identity and Relative Income within Households. *The Quarterly Journal of Economics*, 130(2), 571–614.

Motivation

- Gender identity norms
 - Male breadwinner role
- Couples in which women outearn husbands...
 - Less happy
 - More likely to have marital problems
 - More likely to divorce

Fig. 1: Distribution of Income Between Partners in Heterosexual, Married Couples



Adapted from: Bertrand, M., Kamenica, E., & Pan, J. (2015). Gender Identity and Relative Income within Households. *The Quarterly Journal of Economics*, 130(2), 571–614.

Research Question and Approach

Research Question

- **Does violating gender identity norms lead to health problems?**
 1. Does lacking breadwinner status increase the likelihood that men have health problems?
 2. Does *losing* breadwinner status increase the likelihood that men have health problems?
- Diseases of despair

Data

- 15,463 married, heterosexual couples
 - Average of 4.36 years of data per couple
- Examine their health between 2003 and 2017
 - Serious mental illness
 - “Good” subjective well-being
 - Health better or worse than two years ago?
 - Obesity
 - Hypertension
 - Binge drinking

Empirical Approach

1: Fixed-Effects Analysis

- Are people healthier when they're the breadwinner than when they're not?
- Controls for all of the unique, time-constant traits of individuals

$$\begin{aligned} \ddot{Health}_{it} = & \beta_1 \ln \ddot{FamIncome}_{it-1} + \beta_2 \ddot{Unemployed}_{it-1} + \beta_3 \ddot{Breadwinner}_{it-1} + \\ & \beta_4 \ddot{Breadwinner}_{it-1} * \ddot{Unemployed}_{it-1} + \beta_5 \ddot{X}'_{it} + \beta_6 \ddot{Y}'_{it-2} + \ddot{u}_{it}, \end{aligned}$$

where variables have been time-demeaned such that $\ddot{Health}_{it} = Health_{it} - \overline{Health}_{it}$, etc.

2: First Differences Analysis

- Do immediate changes in breadwinner status lead to changes in health?
- Looks at changes in breadwinner status over two consecutive years

$$\begin{aligned}\Delta Health_{it} = & \beta_0 + \beta_1 \Delta \ln FamIncome_{it-1} + \beta_2 \Delta Unemployed_{it-1} + \\ & \beta_3 \Delta Breadwinner_{it-1} + \\ & \beta_4 \Delta Breadwinner_{it-1} * \Delta Unemployed_{it-1} + \\ & \beta_5 \mathbf{X}'_{it} + \beta_6 \mathbf{Y}'_{it-2} + \epsilon_{it}\end{aligned}$$

Findings

Findings: Men

1: Among employed men, how does *lacking* breadwinner status affect health?

2: Among employed men, how does *losing* breadwinner status affect health?

	1: Fixed Effects	2: First Differences
Serious Mental Illness	+*	
“Good” Subjective Well-Being	-***	Stayed Poor: + Improved: + Declined: +
Health Better or Worse?		Better: - Worse: +***
Hypertension	+	
Obesity	-***	
Binge Drinking	+***	Continued: +** Started: + Stopped: +*

*** p<0.01, ** p <0.05, * p<0.1. Odds ratios > 1 are represented as “+”; <1, “-”.

Findings: Women

1: Among employed women, how does *lacking* breadwinner status affect health?

2: Among employed women, how does *losing* breadwinner status affect health?

	1: Fixed Effects	2: First Differences
Serious Mental Illness	-	
“Good” Subjective Well-Being	-***	
Health Better or Worse?		Better: +** Worse: +
Hypertension	+	
Obesity	-	
Binge Drinking	-	Continued: - Started: + Stopped: -

*** p<0.01, ** p <0.05, * p<0.1. Odds ratios > 1 are represented as “+”; <1, “-”.

Conclusion

- Breadwinner status *does* affect health
- Effects vary between men and women

Future research

- When and why does breadwinner status affect health?
- How might other variation in intrahousehold income distributions affect health?

