

Childbirth Is Deadlier for Black Families Even When They're Rich, Expansive Study Finds

By Claire Cain Miller, Sarah Kliff and Larry Buchanan
Produced by Larry Buchanan and Shannon Lin
Feb. 12, 2023

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In the United States, the richest mothers and their newborns are the most likely to survive the year after childbirth — except when the family is Black, according to a groundbreaking new study of two million California births. The richest Black mothers and their babies are twice as likely to die as the richest white mothers and their babies.

Research has [repeatedly shown](#) that Black mothers and babies have the [worst childbirth outcomes](#) in the United States. But this study is novel because it's the first of its size to show how the risks of childbirth vary by both race and parental income, and how Black families, regardless of their socioeconomic status, are disproportionately affected.

“This is a landmark paper, and what it makes really stark is how we are leaving one group of people way behind,” said Atheendar Venkataramani, a University of Pennsylvania economist who studies racial health disparities and was not involved in the research.

The [study](#), published last month by the National Bureau of Economic Research, includes nearly all the infants born to first-time mothers from 2007 to 2016 in California, the state with the most annual births. For the first time, it combines income tax data with birth, death and hospitalization records and demographic data from the Census Bureau and the Social Security Administration, while protecting identities.



For a wealthy country, the United States is a dangerous place to be a newborn. But it is not equally risky for all babies.

DIFFERENT WAYS OF KNOWING



QUALITATIVE

Unstructured

Narrative

Descriptive

Human



QUANTITATIVE

Structured

Numeric

Projective

Relational

PLAY TO STRENGTHS



QUALITATIVE

Immerse and Explore

Develop Theory

Humanize Understanding

Reveal the Why



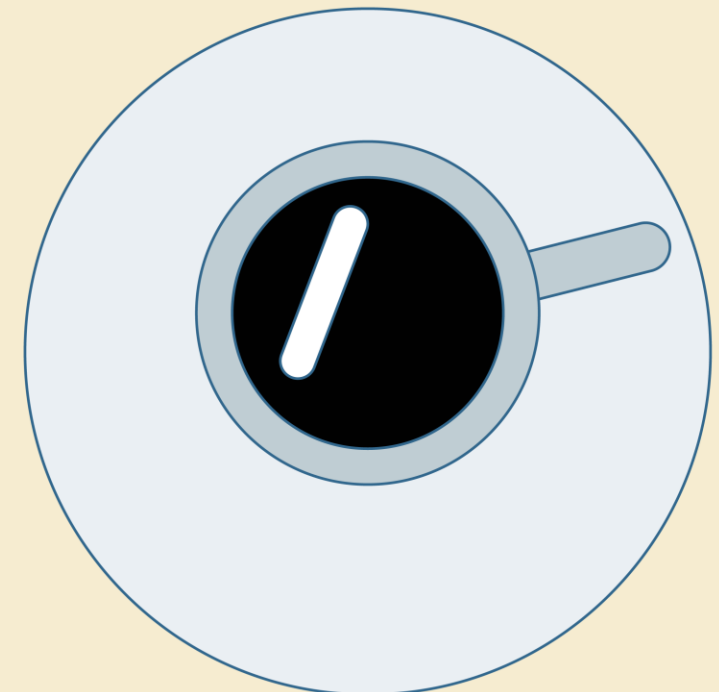
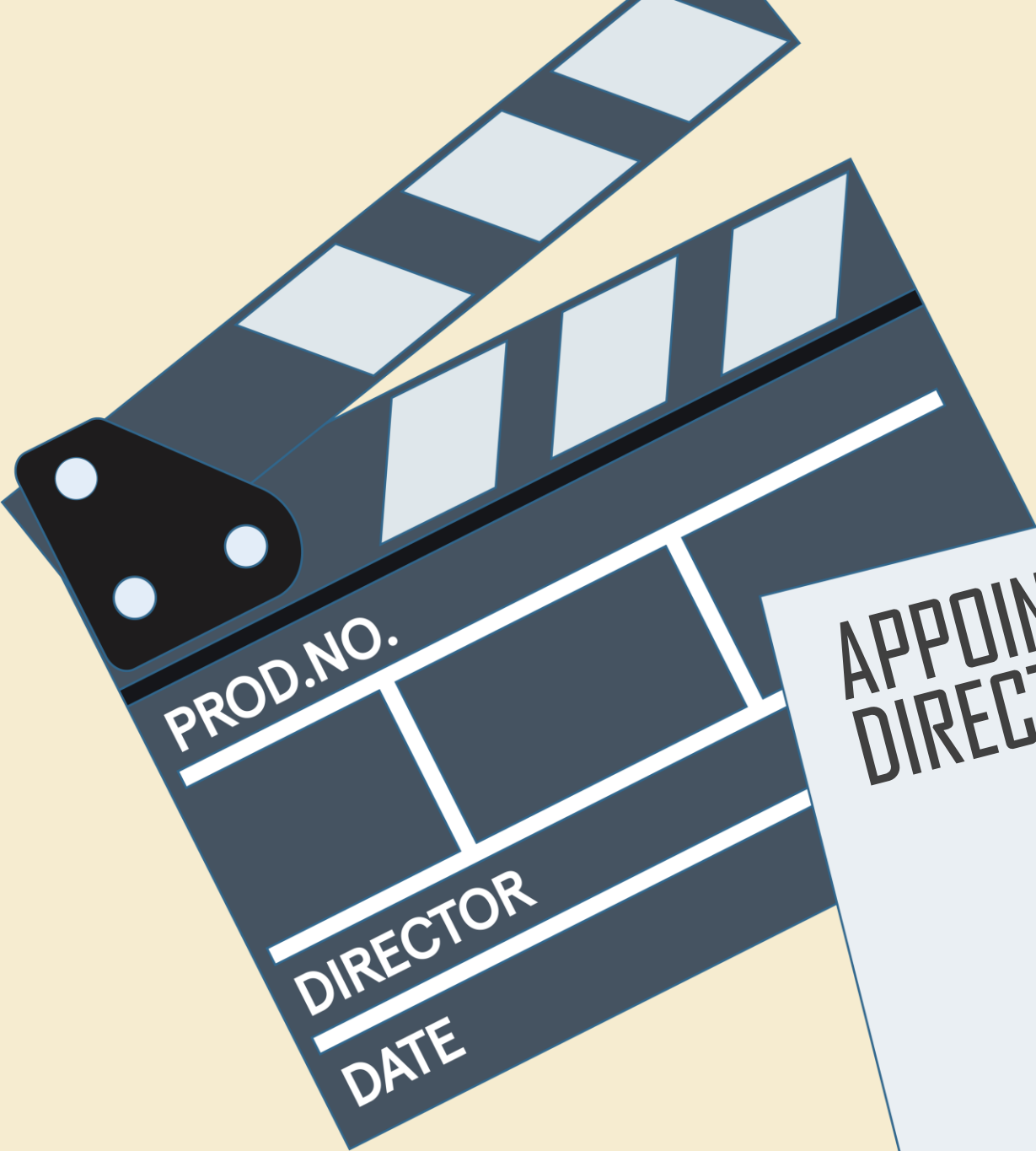
QUANTITATIVE

Predict and Project

Test Hypotheses

Structure Understanding

Reveal the What



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