

VID Colloquium

# Using Birth Spacing Information to Estimate Age at First Birth in Incomplete Fertility Histories: How Well Does It Perform?

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Some large scale surveys such as the CPS June files provide only partial fertility histories, posing challenges to users. The CPS, for example, has collected full retrospective birth histories of women until survey year 1995, but reduced the collected items in subsequent survey years. This paper proposes a new method for the estimation of age at first birth for surveys which provide information on parity and women's age at last birth only, the birth spacing method, and uses the CPS June Files to demonstrate this technique. Based on the information of women who's full fertility histories are available, average parity-specific birth spacing intervals for 5-year birth cohorts by race and education are estimated. In a second step, these averages are used to estimate the age at first birth for the cases with partial fertility histories. For a future version of this paper, it is planned to compare the results on birth spacing and imputed age at first birth with estimates from the NSFG in order to test how well this method performs in estimating age at first birth. The presentation will focus on introducing the spacing method with the CPS data and discuss possible strategies for a performance test with the NSFG data.

## About the presenter

Natalie Nitsche is currently an Instructor at Yale College. She obtained her PhD in Sociology from Yale University in 2014. Her research interests include social demography, fertility, and social inequality. She will join the Vienna Institute for Demography as a post-doctoral associate in the Fall of 2014.

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