

ECON 460: Women, Work, and the World Economy

Reading Guide: “Missing Women and the Price of Tea in China: The Effect of Sex-Specific Earnings on Sex Imbalance”

Read the entire article. The article does not contain a lot of unnecessary information, but do not get bogged down if you find the discussion of the unitary household model (and whether her empirical analysis is consistent with it) confusing. We will discuss the unitary household model in class.

After reading the article, you should be able to answer the following questions:

1. How does the sex ratio vary across birth cohorts born between 1970 and 2000?
2. Why might changes in the price of tea impact female survival?
3. What is the main hypothesis that Professor Qian wishes to test?
4. What are the different categories of crops defined by the Chinese government?
5. How did the agricultural reforms implemented by the Chinese government in the late 1970s alter the relative returns to different crops?
6. What is Professor Qian’s identification strategy? What is being compared to what in her empirical analysis? Who is in the comparison group?
7. What regression specification(s) does Professor Qian use in her empirical analysis?
8. What is the main result shown in Figure III (b)?
9. How instrumental variable does Professor Qian use to predict tea-planting? Why might this be a good instrument? What concerns do you have about the validity of her instrument?
10. What are Professor Qian’s main sources of data? What is her sample? What are the key outcomes of interest?
11. What are the main empirical takeaways from Table III?
12. What are the main empirical takeaways from Figure VI?
13. Do you find the empirical analysis presented in this article convincing? Why or why not? What other factors might (partially) explain the observed pattern of results?