

Giulia Ferrero

giulia.ferrero@carloalberto.org ◊ LinkedIn ◊ Personal Website

Research interests

Primary Political Economy, Economic History and Development
Secondary Narratives, Media, Conflict, Gender

Current position

Visiting PhD Student *forthcoming!* Summer 2026
ENS Lyon - CERGIC Lyon, France
Sponsor: Mathieu Couttenier

Visiting PhD Student *forthcoming!* May 2026
UCLA Anderson Los Angeles, USA
Sponsor: Nico Voigtlander

CID PhD Fellow, Harvard Kennedy School Spring 2026
Center for International Development - Harvard Kennedy School Boston, USA
Sponsor: Eliana La Ferrara

PhD Candidate in Economics, Università di Torino and Collegio Carlo Alberto 2022 - Present
Doctoral Fellow at Collegio Carlo Alberto Torino, Italy
Advisors: Elena Esposito and Giovanni Mastrobuoni

Education

Second Cycle Master Degree in Economics (LMEC) 2018 – 2020
Alma Mater Studiorum - Università di Bologna - Final Grade: 110 cum laude Bologna, Italy
Supervisors: Matteo Cervellati and Paolo Vanin
Master Thesis: “Organized Violence in a global perspective: an empirical investigation, 1989-2019”

Bachelor in Economics 2015 - 2018
University of Torino - Final Grade: 110 cum laude Torino, Italy

Complex Network Analysis: Tools for Economic Development July 2023
Barcelona School of Economics (BSE) Barcelona, Spain

Working Papers

Wartime Narratives and Gender Norms (JMP)

Awarded the 2025 Mixtape Fellowship by Scott Cunningham

Can governments rapidly reshape social and gender norms through mass media in response to large economic shocks? I focus on the U.S. home front during World War II, when severe labor shortages prompted the federal government to actively promote women’s employment through nationwide media campaigns. To examine how this effort reshaped public discourse, I construct a new dataset combining historical newspapers with a newly digitized archive of women’s magazines, allowing the tracing of changes in representations of women before, during, and after the war. Exploiting local variation in war-induced labor shortages and using an event-study design, I document a pronounced wartime shift toward portraying women as workers, followed by a rapid retreat once the war ended. While these narratives were short-lived, areas more exposed to wartime pressures experienced a more persistent increase in the visibility of women in public discourse. I then examine whether exposure to wartime narratives influenced postwar attitudes toward women’s roles. Combining historical survey data with a shift-share strategy based on magazine circulation and content, the results suggest that institutional messaging can rapidly reshape social narratives, with effects that may persist beyond the original economic shock even as economic conditions revert.

Sons of War: the Effect of Conflict on Son Preference with Jessica Mancuso

Awarded the Grigor Artsruni Award at the Armenian Economic Association Conference in Yerevan

Armenia and Azerbaijan, engaged in the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict, are known for their strong son preference and widespread use of abortion. In such a peculiar setting, we ask: does ethnic conflict affect son preference? By merging Demographic and Health Survey (DHS) data with two different sources of conflict-related casualties, we investigate the effect of ethnic conflict on fertility decisions. To do so, we leverage variations in geographic and temporal exposure to conflict-related violence in the context of the First Nagorno-Karabakh War (1988–1994), alongside variation in the gender composition of children between families. We find that families with only daughters exposed to conflict increase their fertility in the very short term. Furthermore, our analysis of births by gender reveals that this result is driven by the

birth of sons. Conflict intensifies son preference, manifesting in son-targeted fertility behavior and sex-selective abortions. Lastly, we identify child replacement as a mechanism contributing to the increase in fertility, driven primarily by the replacement of male children.

Work in Progress

Narratives and Movies with Elena Esposito, Tiziano Rotesi and Alessandro Saia

Conference and seminar presentations

- 2026 Graduate Workshop in Economic History - Harvard University, CID Research Xchange at Harvard Kennedy School
- 2025 2025 BAEM (Bristol Applied Economics Meetings) Workshop on Gender, Diversity and Human Capital, Fragile Lives 2025, VPDE 2025 internal PhD forum, Third Political Economy CCA-Cornell-Bocconi Winter Workshop (poster)
- 2024 VPDE 2024 internal PhD forum

Teaching

Econometric Theory I - graduate 2023-2025
Collegio Carlo Alberto - TA to Yagan Hazard

Microeconomics Spring 2024
SAA - School of Management TA to Nadia Campaniello

Professional Experience

Research Assistant for Elena Esposito (*CCA/UNITO*) 2023

Research Assistant for Margherita Fort and Michela Carlana (*UNIBO*) 2022

Trainee in DGI - External Developments (DG-I/EXT) - European central bank (ECB) 2021-2022

Research Assistant for Matteo Cervellati (*UNIBO*) 2020

Research Assistant for Luca Lambertini (*UNIBO*) 2019

Skills

IT knowledge Python, STATA, R, Latex, Qualtrics, QGIS, text analysis, web scraping, LLMs - assistants management and validation

Languages Italian (mother tongue); English (fluent)

References

Elena Esposito

Collegio Carlo Alberto, Junior Chair
Full professor in Economics
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Juan Vargas

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Giovanni Mastrobuoni

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Eliana La Ferrara

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