

JOE MITCHELL-NELSON

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FIELDS OF EXPERTISE

Development economics, stated preference research methods, applied econometrics, microeconomic theory

EDUCATION

University of Oregon

Ph.D. in Economics

Expected 2021

M.S. in Economics

2018

Portland State University

B.S. in Economics

2015

B.S. in Philosophy

2012

WORKING PAPERS

“Cultural insiders and foreign aid: How the cultural background of World Bank project managers affects project success” (job market paper)

- I use a new measure of cultural proximity between countries, based on the genetic distance measure compiled by Spolaore and Wacziarg (2018) and data from the World Bank, to quantify how much cultural overlap likely exists between project leaders and the countries where these projects take place. To address possible endogeneity arising from assignment of managers to projects, I instrument for cultural proximity with the average cultural proximity of other available project leaders. Where institutions are strong, culturally similar project managers outperform those who are more culturally distant, but this relationship is not present in countries with poor institutions.

RESEARCH IN PROGRESS

“Temperature and propensity to report crimes: Evidence from Denver and Los Angeles”

- A body of robust interdisciplinary research finds that aggression and violence increase on hot days. One prominent stream of this literature leverages the relationship between the number of reported crimes among a population and plausibly exogenous variation in temperature. An identifying assumption underlying this body of research is that crime reporting rates do not vary systematically with temperature. I present evidence that this assumption is unjustified and that consequently the relationship between heat and crime is likely to be overstated. Using survival analysis of incident-level crime data from Denver and Los Angeles and daily weather data from the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Association (NOAA), I find that crimes are reported more quickly during periods of hot weather. I present a model demonstrating that, given mild assumptions, delays in crime reporting are associated with lower reporting rates. Based on data from the Demographic and Health Surveys (DHS), I also present evidence for a candidate mechanism: heat appears to affect the formation of moral judgments.

“Willingness to bear the costs of pandemic restrictions” (with Trudy Ann Cameron)

- We develop and field a stated preference survey about pandemic restrictions to a representative sample of Oregonians. Our results will allow us to identify the tradeoffs Oregonians are willing to make between, on the one hand, the economic burden and inconvenience of pandemic restrictions and, on the other, the avoided illnesses and deaths those restrictions are likely to achieve.

“Differential attention to attributes in stated preference research: evidence from Mouselab” (with Trudy Ann Cameron)

- In typical stated preference surveys, respondents are required to make cognitively taxing choices among a set of alternatives. We build a model of attention allocation that assumes subjects gain utility from accurately representing their preferences in incentive compatible surveys but that subject attention is finite and costly. We

validate our model using data from mouse-tracking software, collected while subjects work through a stated preference survey about health outcomes.

PUBLICATIONS

“Subreption, radical institutionalism, and economic evolution” (with John Hall and Alexander Dunlap) in Panoeconomicus, 2016

TEACHING

Independent instructor

EC 201: Principles of Microeconomics

Fall 2019 & Spring, Summer, Fall 2020

EC 311: Intermediate Microeconomic Theory

Spring, Summer 2019

Teaching assistant

EC 320: Introduction to Econometrics I

Spring 2018

EC 607: Advanced Microeconomic Theory

Winter 2017

EC 201: Principles of Microeconomics

Fall 2017

HONORS, AWARDS, GRANTS, AND FELLOWSHIPS

- 2020 Department of Economics Graduate Teaching Award
- 2018 Kleinsorge Summer Fellowship from University of Oregon Department of Economics
- 2016 Kleinsorge First-year Fellowship from University of Oregon Department of Economics
- 2015 Harold Vatter Award for outstanding economics undergraduates from Portland State University
- 2007 National Merit Finalist

TECHNICAL STRENGTHS

Software & Tools

R, Stata, julia, Shiny, Excel

WORK EXPERIENCE

English teacher

Jonathan Education Center (Portland, OR)

2012-2015

English and Math teacher

Kaplan Test Prep (Washington, D.C.)

2009-2011

REFERENCES

Trudy Ann Cameron (doctoral committee chair)
R. F. Mikesell Professor of Economics
cameron@uoregon.edu

Alfredo Burlando (doctoral committee member)
Associate Professor of Economics
burlando@uoregon.edu

Shankha Chakraborty (doctoral committee member)
Professor of Economics
shankhac@uoregon.edu

Sharon Kaplan
Graduate Placement Coordinator
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