



JOHN MAYNARD KEYNES
AND DUNCAN GRANT
(ABOUT 1913)

Recent Events in Partnership with APPAM Conference

- Christopher Carpenter (*pgp: he/him/his*)

On Friday, Nov 9, 2018, we held two very successful events for LGBTQ economists in conjunction with the Fall Research Conference of the Association for Public Policy Analysis & Management (APPAM), held in Washington DC.

First, we held a panel on navigating the PhD job market as a queer-identified person. Six panelists and several audience members shared their experiences, tips, and advice. They answered questions such as “When should I come out to potential employers?,” “How did you make your decisions about where you would and would not apply?” and “What employer benefits were particularly important to you in your job search?” We live-streamed this event and saved the recording. Any interested member of our group can access this recording by emailing us at lgbtq.newsletter.econ@gmail.com.

After the job-market panel we had an APPAM-supported reception with food, drinks, and cupcakes! This event was very well attended by LGBTQ APPAM attendees and allies, as well as by numerous DC-area economists and social scientists. About 70 people turned up at some point in the evening, with the reception spilling out into the hallway and conversations going late into the evening.

We think both these events were enormously successful, and are grateful to APPAM for its financial support of our activities!

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NOTES FROM THE PROFESSION

Notes from the Graduate Student Summit for Diversity in Economics

- Susanna Berkouwer (*pgp: they/them/theirs or she/her/hers*) & Sandile Hlatshwayo (*pgp: she/her/hers*)

Although we had an inkling beforehand, we could not anticipate just how transformational it would be to come together for the inaugural *Graduate Student Summit for Diversity in Economics*, hosted by the Women in Economics at Berkeley (WEB) on September 28-29, 2018 at the University of California, Berkeley.

Joining us were nearly 200 underrepresented graduate students and economists, largely female-identifying but also including a sprinkling of male-identifying attendees and a solid gender-fluid contingent.

The summit set out to “bring together graduate students, professors, and other economists who are committed to promoting

diversity in economics to discuss the state of gender, racial, and LGBTQIA representation in economics, to share learning between WEB and groups like it on other campuses, and to foster networking between graduate students across different institutions.”

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FEATURED ECONOMIST

Questions and Answers with Gregory Lewis, Microsoft Research

The LGBTQ community makes important contributions to the economics profession every day. To highlight this work, we regularly interview LGBTQ economists and share these conversations through this newsletter. Content is lightly edited for readability. If you would like to nominate someone (or yourself) to be interviewed, please email: mgms@umich.edu.

- Michael Mueller-Smith (pgp: he/him/his)



Gregory Lewis is a principal researcher at Microsoft Research New England. Before joining Microsoft he was an associate professor of economics at Harvard, teaching industrial organization and market design.

Michael Mueller-Smith: Why don't you tell me about yourself? How did you get interested in the field of economics?

Gregory Lewis: I grew up in South Africa, where I was a pretty nerdy kid. I was very into math, and I used to get really interested in gambling and statistics. I actually ended up designing my own gambling games, to fleece money off my younger brother. So that is where I started — interested in math, money or some combination thereof. When I got a bit older or went to college, I started off as an actuary, which turned out to be incredibly boring and depressing, really — a lot of studying mortality. So, I switched halfway through into economics, which I had started learning and thought was really interesting because it was mathematical, statistical, and very much interested in or concerned with people and other important issues. Being able to apply the statistics and modeling to topics that really seemed to matter was exciting.

MMS: You're quite accomplished as an economist, which makes me think that you still enjoy the field. What do you like about our profession?

GL: I actually have a nice perspective on this now because I've been sitting at an interdisciplinary research lab. One of the things that I've come to appreciate about economics is that we all speak the same language. It is very easy for economists to talk to each other and have a consistent point of view on any given topic. In seminars, we're not lost; we're actually talking to each other. I can be an IO economist talking to a labor economist and we can have a very easy conversation, because we understand the same basic concepts, which I think is great.

Another thing that is great about economics is that we're really willing to jump in and argue with each other, rather than just sit back and politely applaud. I think that's great because you

make a lot of progress when you present, which helps your ideas get more sophisticated.

MMS: I agree. No profession is perfect, though. What do you think could be improved in the economics profession?

GL: I think there are a couple of things that are a bit the flip of the positive things I like. One is that while we all speak the same language, we're also accused of being imperialistic or arrogant, which can be accurate. There is a lot to be learned from other disciplines, but it can take time to understand what people in other fields are talking about because the language or approach are so different. But often when you do, you have moments like "Oh, that's really similar to how we think about that problem, but with a new technique that I've never seen before." That happens quite a lot to me when I'm talking to computer scientists. Or when talking to my colleagues in anthropology, I realize they look at a problem in a way that is completely different from how I would. There's something really interesting about the contrast in approaches. Openness to other disciplines is one thing we could do better on.

The second thing is that we don't show a lot of respect in seminars sometimes. While I think it's great to have a healthy exchange of ideas, it would also be nice to acknowledge what we learn. I see my colleagues in other fields saying "Thank you for that seminar. I really learned a lot," and then asking a question. Compare that with jumping directly into "I hate your identification strategy." There's something there that maybe we could work on.

MMS: A lot of people would be quite interested to learn about your role and experience at Microsoft Research and what topics you're currently working on.

GL: I've been interested lately in two topics mostly: economic models of search — people looking for jobs, cameras or something else they want to buy — and the intersection of econometrics and machine learning.

On the search side, I've been interested in how we model search. Standard sequential search models are oversimplifications of

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NOTES FROM THE PROFESSION: *Recent Events in Partnership with APPAM Conference*

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The APPAM leadership was extremely impressed with the turnout for the reception, and has already asked us to do it again at its Fall Research Conference in Denver, Colorado in November 2019.

A few hours after the research session, about 30 of us gathered for an informal happy hour at Toasted Walnut, an LGBTQ-owned bar near the conference hotel.

We welcomed new faces, caught up with old friends, and reflected on the day and our work ahead.

It was a great day for our working group! We look forward to seeing everyone this January in Atlanta and to further growing this community. And we thank the AEA for its continued commitment to and support of these important efforts. ▼

Photos from our LGBTQ PhD job-market panel and November 9th APPAM-supported reception (Fall Research Conference of the Association for Public Policy Analysis & Management in Washington, DC)



NOTES FROM THE PROFESSION: *Notes from the Graduate Student Summit for Diversity in Economics**- continued from page 1**Attendees of the inaugural Graduate Student Summit for Diversity in Economics, hosted by Women in Economics at Berkeley (WEB) - 9/28/18*

Professor Shelly Lundberg (UC Santa Barbara and Chair of the AEA's Committee on the Status of Women in the Economics Profession) kicked off the summit with a talk on the state of the field of economics. She shared sobering statistics on representation of women and minorities in economics. In a particularly poor reflection on the state of things, she noted that there are currently no statistics tracking LGBTQ economists in the U.S.

Professor Martha Olney (UC Berkeley) moderated a panel on pedagogy, emphasizing the importance of engaging students from all backgrounds on the topics they find interesting during their very first introduction to economics. To this end, panelists suggested doing away with some of the current core materials (e.g. cost curves) in favor of topics like decision theory, inequality, and development economics. To demonstrate how minor improvements in representation can have major impact in the classroom, Olney recently wrote an exam in which she used the gender-neutral names Chris and Robin to describe two individuals “who both prefer gender-neutral pronouns, who are a married couple, and who both engage in home & market production,” to frame a question about a Production Possibility Frontier. This seemingly simple edit to a classic introductory economics question had a tremendous effect.” A student from Olney’s class later tweeted a note of appreciation, explaining that it felt incredibly validating to see themselves represented in an exam question.

Professor Lisa Cook (Michigan State University) encouraged students to pursue internships in organizations where they see interesting questions being asked. With respect to pedagogy, Cook highlighted the importance of using the Socratic method to nudge students (especially underrepresented minorities) to develop their own voices in the classroom.

Professor Pascaline Dupas (Stanford University) called for a broadening of expectations on what seminar speakers will look like and what questions are worth researching.

Professor Juan Carlos Suárez Serrato (Duke University) shared strategies that support more inclusive informal interactions and conferences, suggesting a “no manel” (no all-male panel) policy when serving on conference organizing committees or when invited to participate on a panel. Part and parcel of such a policy is having a current list of peers to draw on — without which organizers tend to default to a small subset of economists within each field.

Professor Trevon Logan (The Ohio State University) discussed the need to do away with tokenism within departments, noting that diversity efforts do not stop at the point of hiring. He recommends that recruitment committees not hire underrepresented minority faculty without giving careful thought and appropriate resources to help maximize a new hire’s success in their respective department over the longer term.

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NEWS

Job-Market Candidate

Dario Sansone (Georgetown University)

Applied microeconomics, labor economics, development economics

Job Market Paper: “Pink Work: Same-Sex Marriage, Employment and Discrimination.” This paper

analyzes how the legalization of same-sex marriage in the U.S. affected gay and lesbian couples in the labor market by using data from the American Community Survey.

Access to marriage led to amendments in tax, health insurance, and adoption laws that could have encouraged some same-sex partners to specialize in household production and decrease their labor supply. Nevertheless, estimates from a difference-in-difference model show that the individual and joint probabilities of being employed increased among same-sex couples. Additional empirical evidence from survey data and Google searches for homophobic terms suggests that these changes in employment were driven by improvements in attitudes and lower discrimination against sexual minorities following the introduction of marriage equality.

<https://sites.google.com/view/dariosansone/research?authuser=0>

Promotions & Jobs

Mary Daly has been named the Federal Reserve Bank of San Francisco President and Chief Executive Officer.

Nick Huntington-Klein (CSU Fullerton) received the Mihaylo Faculty Excellence Award.

Itziar Lazkano (University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee) has been promoted to Associate Professor with tenure.

Alyssa Schneebaum has joined the faculty at Vienna University of Economics and Business.

The newsletter team would like to congratulate those who've recently received promotions and awards!

Publications (Recent & Forthcoming)

M.V. Lee Badgett and Alyssa Schneebaum. 2018.

“Poverty in U.S. Lesbian and Gay Couple Households.” *Feminist Economics*.

M.V. Lee Badgett (with Amanda Baumle and Steven Boutcher). **“Evidence from the Frontlines on Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity Discrimination,”** a new report with data-visualization graphics and a webinar, found at <https://lgbtdiscrimination.org/>

Marina Gorsuch. Forthcoming. **“Gender, Sexual Orientation, and Behavioral Norms in the Labor Market.”** *Industrial and Labor Relations Review*.

Marina Gorsuch (with Samuel Myers, Yufeng Lai, Rachel Motachwa, and Devan Steward). Forthcoming. **“Vanishing Racial Disparities in Drowning in Florida.”** *Injury Prevention*.

Nick Huntington-Klein (with Elaina Rose). 2018. **“Gender Peer Effects in a Predominantly Male Environment: Evidence from West Point.”** *AEA Papers and Proceedings* 108: 392-95.

Nick Huntington-Klein. 2018. **“College Choice as a Collective Decision.”** *Economic Inquiry*. 56(2): 1202-19.

Hani Mansour (with Brian Duncan and Bryson Rintala). Forthcoming. **“Weighing the Military Option: The Effects of Wartime Conditions on Investments in Human Capital.”** *Economic Inquiry*.

Hani Mansour (with Terra McKinnish). 2018. **“Marital Sorting: Explanations and Evidence.”** In: Averett SL, Argys L, and Hoffman SD (eds). *The Oxford Handbook of Women and the Economy*, Oxford University Press, 1-26.

Erik Plug (with Lydia Geijtenbeek). 2018. **“Is there a Penalty for Registered Women? Is there a Premium for Registered Men? Evidence from a Sample of Transsexual Workers.”** *European Economic Review* 109 (October), 334-47.

Erik Plug (with Thomas Buser and Lydia Geijtenbeek). 2018. **“Sexual Orientation, Competitiveness and Income.”** *Journal of Economic Behavior & Organization* 151 (July), 191-8.

Dario Sansone. Forthcoming. **“Beyond Early Warning Indicators: High School Dropout and Machine Learning.”** *Oxford Bulletin of Economics and Statistics*.

John Tang (with Chris Meissner). Forthcoming. **“Upstart Industrialization and Exports: Evidence from Japan 1880-1910.”** *Journal of Economic History*.

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NOTES FROM THE PROFESSION: *Notes from the Graduate Student Summit for Diversity in Economics**- continued from page 4*

Professor Ebonya Washington (Yale University) led a discussion around advising culture, and how best to support underrepresented students as they navigate their academic relationships within existing structures. She reminded us that it can be counterproductive to *assume* students' needs; in particular, there can be a tendency to assume we understand underrepresented students' needs based solely on their identity. It can be helpful to simply ask students what they need and to respond in accordance with what they request. Finally, she emphasized the importance of finding emotional support outside of our economics networks. We all bring unique backgrounds and experiences, and we all have a community somewhere that is proud of how far we have come.

While rich in content, several portions of the conference also hit an inspirational note. Cook led us in an impromptu sing-along of "This Little Light of Mine" — likely a first for an economics conference. During Olney's remarks in the Peixotto Room (named after Dr. Jessica Peixotto, the second woman to earn a doctorate at UC Berkeley and the campus's first full-time female faculty member) we learned about Emily H. Huntington — one of the first known lesbian faculty members of the economics department at Berkeley — who began her career there in the late 1920s.¹

Dr. Mary Daly — recently appointed as President of the Federal Reserve Bank of San Francisco and also the first openly lesbian head of a Federal Reserve Bank in history — gave a keynote address urging us to bring "all of ourselves" to our work.² As economists, we often revel in our ability to remain dispassionate about the most passion-inducing of topics, Daly said. While productive for research, at times this practice spills over into our lived experiences as we attempt to remove the "I" from our professional work. Her argument rests on three assertions: (1) science needs people, (2) policy needs different people, and (3) progress needs challenge. On these latter two points, diversity (of background, opinion, and experiences —

often overlapping) is central. Daly also shared experiences from her own job-market process, such as having to consider the level of acceptance she and her wife might experience in different parts of the U.S.

In smaller breakout groups, graduate students were invited to share their personal struggles. The workshop on self-care techniques underscored just how many students battle with mental-health issues during graduate school, which can be compounded for LGBTQIA students. Many expressed how important therapy and external anchors were in maintaining their mental health. It's clear that departments can do a better job in highlighting the school's resources (including free mental-health consultations and group sessions). In terms of external anchors, students mentioned everything from volunteering at animal shelters to exercise to an occasional queer dance party. One point of consensus: having non-economics friends is crucial.

While there is much work to be done to step-change our discipline's diversity, the conference felt like a turning point on this journey.

Washington also suggested looking externally for research ideas. A fluke encounter on a check-out line, with a fellow shopper who was using food stamps, resulted in her 2010 publication in the *American Economic Journal: Economic Policy* (with Professor Justine Hastings at Brown University) on the monthly cyclicity of food expenditures by benefits recipients.

Reflecting on the conference, Olney called it "probably the most amazing and gratifying day of [her] professional life." And **Professor Gillian Brunet** (Wesleyan) pointed out that "the most incredible thing about the [summit] is that it's a window into what an alternate world with a much healthier economics profession would look like."

We share these sentiments. It was an immense feat to get all of us in the same room together. While there is much work to be done to step-change our discipline's diversity, the conference felt like a turning point on this journey. ▼

¹ Emily Huntington discusses her relationship with Dorothy Williams in her oral history, "A Career in Consumer Economics and Social Insurance," available online at <http://bancroft.berkeley.edu/ROHO/projects/ewge/index.html>.

² The first openly gay FRB President was Dr. Raphael Bostic, current President of the Federal Reserve Bank of Atlanta.

FEATURED ECONOMIST: *Questions and Answers with Gregory Lewis, Microsoft Research*

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the world we live in today, so I've been working on developing richer models. I've also been interested in what you can do with the search data we have. Search data provides an opportunity to really learn about how people are searching, how the process works, where there will be path dependence, etc.

On the intersection of econometrics and machine learning, one set of questions is what kind of cool new techniques can you pull from machine learning and take to your dataset to get something new out that you wouldn't otherwise be able to see. Progress in text analysis is a great example of this. The other set of big questions concerns the responsible use of these techniques. Using machine learning for formal inference — that's something you can do, but you have to be careful. People like Susan Athey and Victor Chernozhukov have papers on how to do this. I've been working in that area a little bit too. We now have an approach for doing non-parametric instrumental variables with neural nets, and we can show you that this has certain advantages. For example, it allows you to use text data with instrumental variables, which is exciting. We're also starting to think about what you should worry about when you decide to use new techniques for something like instrumental variables.

MMS: What do you enjoy when you're not doing economics?

GL: My favorite thing is being outdoors, and especially rock climbing. My idea of good day is one spent on a crag, getting up and down a rock face.

MMS: Do you have any advice for graduate students or junior economists?

GL: It feels like the world is changing increasingly quickly and so the ability to be flexible is important. I think it's important to understand machine learning, because I think it will be a big deal going forward. It is also important to recognize that what people have worked on in the past is not necessarily going to be what tomorrow's topics are going to look like, and so maybe really trying to think outside the box and find new ways of approaching problems. Try to come up with completely different ways of answering classic questions. Having said that I still feel that you've got to understand the basics of modeling, because that's really what unites us as economists. We all understand the classic ideas of economics, and those you have to have a firm understanding of. ▼

NEWS

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Call for Papers

In 2020, *The Review of Black Political Economy* will publish a special interdisciplinary issue titled “**Public Policy and the Political Economy of Black LGBTQ Identities.**” While there is a wealth of research focused on the intersection of race, the economy, and policy, and burgeoning research on policy, economics, and sexual orientation, there is little work which analyzes the intersections of Blackness, public policy, the economy, and LGBTQ identity. This special issue seeks to counter this erasure by calling for research which explores the varying connections between the political economy, public policy, and aspects of Black LGBTQ identity.

Researchers addressing the unique features that arise when Black LGBTQ identity is embedded in, or ignored by, policy considerations and/or the political economy are cordially invited to submit their work. We are interested in empirical research and theoretical work that pays substantive attention to the heterogeneity inherent within

racial groups and within sexual and gender identity groups. In this regard, we seek work that considers Blackness alongside sexual orientation and/or gender identity to effectively bring to light this heterogeneity and its intersections. Submitted manuscripts are welcomed from a broad range of disciplines, as this issue seeks a broad and interdisciplinary approach to issues compounding the marginalization of those identifying as Black and LGBTQ. Additionally, manuscripts may use a variety of methods to explore Black LGBTQ identity in relation to topics such as welfare policy, immigration, the administration of government, family policy, law and economics, public health, tax policy, employment, housing, policing, education, equity and disparity, and other related topics.

The submission deadline for a full manuscript is June 30, 2019.

For questions regarding the special issue, please contact Tia Sherèe Gaynor by email at tiasheree.gaynor@uc.edu, or Trevon D. Logan at logan.155@osu.edu. ▼

MAYNARD'S NOTES



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THE NEWSLETTER OF THE AMERICAN
ECONOMIC ASSOCIATION'S LGBTQ and
FRIENDS COMMUNITY



MAYNARD'S NOTES

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