

Tianyi Li

Department of Economics, The University of Arizona
☎ +1(520)500-3780 • ✉ tianyili1@arizona.edu

Education

The University of Arizona

Ph.D in Economics

Dissertation Title: Experimental Studies in Group Behavior

Dissertation Advisor: Charles Noussair

Job Market Paper: Which institutions matter for economic growth? A laboratory experiment

M.A. in Economics

Tucson, AZ, US

May 2024 (expected)

December 2020

University of Connecticut

B.A. in Economics, Minor in Mathematics

Storrs, CT, US

2014-2017

Fields of Interest

Experimental Economics, Behavioral Economics, Political Economy.

Publications

Conditional Cooperation and Group Size: Experimental Evidence from a Public Good Game

Journal of Economic Science Association, forthcoming

with Charles N. Noussair

- Conditional cooperation is the tendency to cooperate if and only if others do so as well. It is the most common behavior in social dilemmas. We study how the incidence of conditional cooperation in the Public Goods game, the most widely studied social dilemma in experimental economics, varies with group size. In a laboratory experiment, we apply the strategy method to elicit how participants' willingness to contribute to a public good depends on other group members' decisions. A within-subject design allows us to evaluate and compare an individual participant's contribution behavior in different-sized groups. Two main findings emerge. First, the share of players who are conditional cooperators is consistent across group sizes. Second, the strategies chosen imply that conditional cooperators hold a (correct) belief that others are more cooperative in a larger than in a smaller group.

Working Papers

Which institutions matter for economic growth? A laboratory experiment

with Charles N. Noussair

- Why are some countries rich while others are poor? Studies of economic growth have explored various factors, and in this paper, we focus on the role of inclusive and extractive institutions using a laboratory experiment. Inclusive institutions allow a broad range of individuals to participate in the economy or the political process and access their benefits. In contrast, extractive institutions concentrate wealth and power in the hands of a small group of individuals, often at the expense of the broader population. Using experimental methods, we study consumption and investment in an economy under four treatments, each representing a different combination of inclusive and extractive institutions. Our findings show that a combination of inclusive political and economic institutions increases consumption, welfare, and capital stock. Additionally, extractive political institutions adversely affect wealth equality.

Imposter Syndrome and Overconfidence: An Experiment

with Charles N. Noussair

- The feeling that one is less qualified than one's peers, known as imposter syndrome, is very common. In this paper, we study imposter syndrome and its relationship to overconfidence. We conduct an experiment in which individuals first take a mathematics test. They are then sorted into levels based on their performance, and matched with a competitor who scored at a similar level. The matched pairs then take a second mathematics test. Before sorting into levels, they are asked to predict the probability that they perform better than the person that they are paired with. If they properly condition on the rule that sorts participants into pairs, they would predict a probability of 50% of being the better performer in their pair. We find that participants do condition on the way their opponent has been sorted but do not sufficiently condition on their own sorting. We argue that such a bias can generate imposter syndrome. Individuals are less optimistic about outperforming a similarly selected peer, the higher performing their group. This effect co-exists with a general pattern of overconfidence, a belief that one has a greater than 50% chance of outperforming a peer with a similar qualification.

Work in Progress

- **How Declining Informal Taxation Facilitates the Declining Competitiveness in Village Elections in Single-Party Vietnam**
with Xiran Chen and Paul Schuler
- **Faces of Nations: The Psychological Roots of Personality Cults**
with Paul Schuler, Chris Weber, Yoshio Kamijo, and Pham Tuan Vinh

Academic Presentations

SEA 93rd Annual Meeting	<i>November 2023 New Orleans, LA, US</i>
2023 North-American ESA Meeting	<i>October 2023 Charlotte, NC, US</i>
2023 CES China Annual Conference	<i>June 2023 Wuhan, China</i>
2023 Asia-Pacific ESA Meeting	<i>May 2023 Seoul, Republic of Korea</i>
AEA CSWEP Workshop	<i>November 2022 Fort Lauderdale, FL, US</i>
2022 North-American ESA Meeting	<i>November 2022 Santa Barbara, CA, US</i>
2022 Virtual Asia Pacific ESA meeting	<i>March 2022 online</i>

Award & Honors

George W. Coleman Scholarship	<i>December 2022</i>
Graduate and Professional Student Council Travel Grant	<i>October 2022</i>
Graduate and Professional Student Council Research and Project (ReaP) Grant	<i>October 2022</i>
Katheryn A.Cassidy Scholarship	<i>April 2017</i>
2016 New England Scholar	<i>March 2017</i>

Teaching Experience

Sole Instructor	<i>Summer 2021/22, Winter 2022, Spring 2023</i>
○ (Econ 200) Basic Economic Issues	
○ (Econ 406) Experimental Economics	

Teaching Assistant

- **ECON courses:** (Econ 407) Economics of Strategy, (Econ 406) Experimental Economics, (Econ 340) International Economics and Policy, (Econ 323) Economics of Sports, (Econ 300) Microeconomic Analysis for Business Decisions, (Econ 200) Basic Economic Issues, (Econ 150) An Economic Perspective
- **other courses:** (Bnad 301) Global and Financial Economics and Strategies

Skills

Programming Languages

Python, R, Stata, Ztree, Otree, SQL

Other skills

L^AT_EX, Qualtrics

References

Charles N. Noussair (Chair)

- Eller Professor of Economics
- Director, Economic Science Laboratory
- President, Economic Science Association
- The University of Arizona
- 520-621-6229
- cnoussair@arizona.edu

Price V. Fishback

- Regents Professor
- APS Professor of Economics
- The University of Arizona
- 520-621-4421
- fishback@arizona.edu

Stanley Reynolds

- Eller Professor of Economics
- The University of Arizona
- 520-621-6065
- sreynold@arizona.edu

John Z. Drabicki (Teaching reference)

- Vice Chair of Economics
- Associate Professor of Economics
- McCoy/Rogers Faculty Fellow
- McClelland Fellow
- The University of Arizona
- 520-621-4221
- drabicki@arizona.edu