Center for Economic Research

UNIVERSITÉ DE LYON

ENS DE LYON

Topics in Economic History

Class 1

Cédric Chambru

University of Lyon, ENS Lyon

6th January 2026

Welcome to ECO-5002 – Topics in Economic History

Outline

1. Course description
2. What is economic history?
3. The evolution of economic history
4. Mapping the evolution of economic history

Logistics

- Materials: all material will be posted on the *Portail des études* (ECO-5002)
- In Class:
  - We really appreciate your participation during class!
  - 6, 8, 15 and 20 Jan.: 8:30 am
  - 29 Jan. and 5 Feb: 8:30 am | 27 Jan. and 10 Feb: 1:00 pm
- Contact: We are available after the class or by appointment (send us an email and they are easily arranged)
  - Me: cedric.chambru@ens-lyon.fr
  - Jade: jade.ponsard@ens-lyon.fr

Why this course?

- Offering insights into the development and transformation of economies over time
  - allow for the identification of patterns and trends, enabling to learn from past mistakes and successes $\Longrightarrow$ better informed policy decisions
  - gain insights into human economic behaviour $\Longrightarrow$ better understanding of how individuals and governments respond to various economic shocks and/or policy changes
  - analyses of long-term economic trends $\Longrightarrow$ e.g. role of technological innovations on productivity, employment, inequality, and living standards

- Intersection of economics, history, political science, and sociology
  - search for causal explanations is only sub-part of the field of economic history!

$\Rightarrow$ Mixture of lecture, presentation & discussion, and reproducibility

Overview of this course [C. Chambru]

1. Introduction [Session 1]
   - The production of economic history research
2. Shocks: famine, epidemics, etc. [Session 2]
   - Historical responses to shocks
3. State-building: institutions and long-run development [Session 3]
   - State-building and economic development
4. Social instability, reforms and regime changes [Session 4]
   - Policies, actors, and agency during period of instability

Topics $\Rightarrow$ social conflict, health and relief policies, revolutions and wars

Overview of this course [J. Ponsard]

1. The American Civil War [Session 5]
   - The diffusion of ideas during wartime
2. Repression in the East [Session 6]
   - The long-term effect of exposure to various forms of violence
3. World Wars [Session 7]
   - World Wars and women empowerment
4. Enfranchisement [Session 8]
   - The consequences of obtaining the right to vote

Topics $\Rightarrow$ cultural norms, diffusion of ideas, and wars

Grading: In-class, 50 %

6 groups of 2-3 students $\Rightarrow$

- In-class presentation: **35 %**
  - You present a paper like if you were the authors during a conference
  - 20 min presentation $\Rightarrow$ at most 2 students as speakers
- In-class referee report: **15 %**
  - You discuss the paper like if you were ask to write a referee report
  - 10 min discussion **(at most !)** $\Rightarrow$ 1 student as discussant

$\Rightarrow$ Tell us what you like or don't in the paper (data, the identification strategy, etc.)

This should serve as **prompts** for discussing about the paper in class!!!

Grading: Term paper, 50 %

Dual assignment:

1. Referee report of the published paper of your choice in econ. hist.
   - A standard referee report
   - If necessary, see Berk et al. (2017) for additional guidelines

2. Reproducibility report on the same paper
   - Computational reproducibility + robustness reproduction
   - Robustness discussion (DAGs) Data visualisation (specification curve), additonal data, etc.

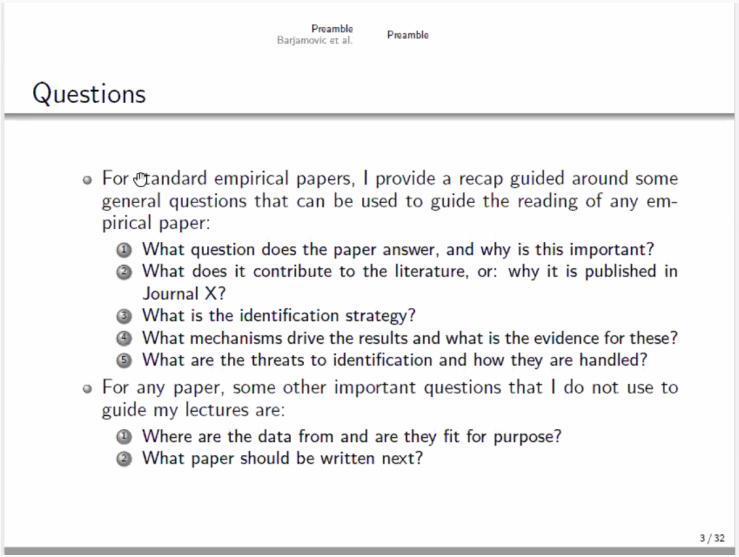
15 Jan. 2026 ⇒ You should inform your instructors of your choice

16 March 2026 ⇒ Term paper is due

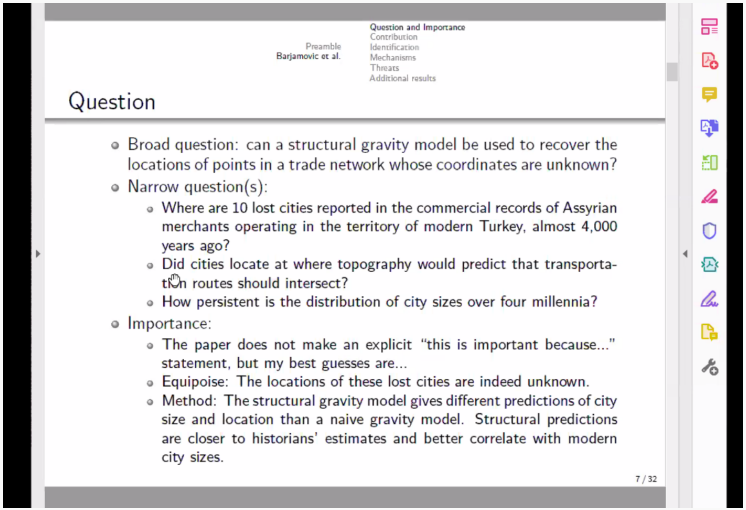
In-class: Papers for presentations

- Session 3 (15/01): 'Bourbon Reforms and State Capacity in the Spanish Empire'
- Session 4 (20/01): 'Revolutionary Contagion'
- Session 5 (27/01): 'The Origins of Women's Political Capital in the Separate Sphere'
- Session 6 (29/01): 'The Political Legacy of Violence: The Long-Term Impact of Stalin's Repression in Ukraine'
- Session 7 (5/02): 'The Political Economy of Women's Suffrage and World War I'
- Session 8 (10/02): 'Peasants into Citizens: Suffrage Expansion and Mass Politics in France'

In-class: Tips by James Fenske to read a paper



James Fenske: what is the research question?



Term paper: Writing a referee report

- Read Berk et al. (2017), 'How to Write an Effective Referee Repor": https://doi.org/10.1257/jep.31.1.231 AEA guidelines

  $\Rightarrow$ Your main responsibility is to help the journal decide whether or not to publish the paper. But you should also consider helping the author produce a better article

- General advises on referee reports (from EJ)
  - Ideally, your report should have THREE sections: Summary + Recommendation, Main Points, and Minor Points
  - Summary + Recommendation: Two paragraphs summarizing what you see as the paper's contribution + a brief summary of what you consider the paper's fit at the EJ: Is it general interest? Is it well-executed?
  - Main Points: Please point out the main strengths and weaknesses
  - Minor Points: Whatever else comes to mind– not directly related to the final recommendation, and not essential to fix

Typical questions

- What does the paper try to do? Does it accomplish what it set out to do?
- Is this paper the first to address an important research question?
- Does the paper have a clear identification strategy? What is it?
- Are these data particularly well-suited to answer the research questions? Are they unique (new)?
- Is the empirical model that the authors employ correctly specified? Are there alternative specifications that they authors could employ? Do the effect sizes make sense compared to others of similar interventions?
- Could the authors make better use of their data to do so? How compelling is the story that the authors are trying to tell? Is the identification of mechanisms plausible?
- What are the most important assumptions embedded in the empirical strategy? Do the robustness checks adequately address these potential violations?

Reproducibility in ECO-5002

- About 1 hour by class
- Next week (15/01)
  - Read the paper of your choosing!
  - Download and read the template for replication report [link]
  - Download the data
  - Bring your laptop (if possible)!
  - Think about collaboration (Drobpox, Drive, Git, etc.)

4 types of exercise (from I4R)

- Computational reproducibility
  - Duplicate the results of a prior study using the same data and procedures (with the same or different software package)
- Robustness replicability
  - Duplicate the results using the same data but different procedures (*robustness*)
- Direct replicability
  - Duplicate the results of a prior study using new data but the same procedures
- Conceptual replicability
  - Duplicate the results of a prior study using new data and different procedures

What is economic history?

What is economic history?

North (1981, p. 3)

> *The task of economic history to explain the structure and performance of economies through time. By 'performance' I have in mind the typical concerns of economists-for example, how much is produced, the distribution of costs and benefits, or the stability of production. The primary emphasis in explaining performance is on total output, output per capita, and the distribution of income of the society. By 'structure' I mean those characteristics of a society which we believe to be the basic determinants of performance. Here I include the political and economic institutions, technology, demography, and ideology.*

$\Longrightarrow$ the evolution of prices (C°and P°), living standards, employment structure, trade and financial flows, economic growth; but also the factors that determined them such as cultural values, demographic behaviour, innovations and technology, and institutions

What is economic history?

- An interdisciplinary field!
  - Mokyr (2003)

Economic history has never been and should never be anything like a closed field in which practitioners converse mostly with one another. Instead, it stands at a busy intersection of history and the social sciences, where economists, political scientists, sociologists, anthropologists, demographers, and historians come and go.

  - Goldin (1995, pp. 191, 207)

The past, many economic theorists have discovered, is a giant experiment station for economic ideas. And empiricists have learned that historical data are often better (for example, because of less litigious environments) and provide larger samples (that is, longer time series).

To use an analogy from medicine, economic historians are family practitioners, not specialists, and like the family doctor they follow the patient over the long run.

How to produce economic history?

Antipa and Bignon (2018)

1. The theoretical clarification: Cliometrics
   - Application of a specific model of economic theory or econometrics to the study of history; often to question certain key elements of a pre-existing narrative

2. The numerical description: The use of long series
   - Often start with the collection and processing of large databases; to give an answer to a clearly formulated testable hypothesis

3. The story: Analytic narratives
   - Based on archival evidence, the narrative constructs an interpretation of reality, and observed facts are interpreted using an analytical framework

The evolution of economic history

Before the 1950s

- c. 1900 $\Rightarrow$ study long-term trends in prices to identify fluctuation in economic activity (e.g. E. Labrousse, G. d'Avenel in France)
- 1920s $\Rightarrow$ need for better economic statistics to to draw inductive generalisations from it (Wesley C. Mitchell in the U.S.): launch of NBER in 1921 to stimulate the collection historical statistics
- Great Depression $\Rightarrow$ reconstruction of past national accounts and gross national income (e.g. S. Kuznets)

The 1950s: the birth of cliometrics

- Also called 'new economic history'
  - The application of **formal economic reasoning** and econometric analysis **to historical trends and events**; mostly historians ⇒ Royal Swedish Academy of Sciences (1993 [link]):

Research that combines economic theory, quantitative methods, hypothesis testing, counterfactual alternatives and traditional techniques of economic history, to explain economic growth and decline

  - First 'credibility revolution': most important and immediate innovation from the formalisation of econ. hist. is the use of '**counterfactual**'

- In 1957, joint meeting on *Research in Income and Wealth* held by the EHA and the NBER
  - Production of various data series on 19th-century U.S., which formed the basis for much of the new economic history

The 1960s: the rise of cliometrics

- Conrad and Meyer (1958) documenting the profitability of slavery in the Antebellum South
- Fogel (1962, 1964) suggesting that the contribution of railroads to U.S. economic growth during the 19th century was rather small ⇒ 'Social savings' approach
- Engerman (1966) showing that the Civil War was not a major spur to the industrialization of the northern state

Example: U.S. railroads and economic growth

Fogel (1962, 1964) about Leland Jenks' work on railroads and economic growth

> *The evidence is impressive. But it demonstrates only an association between the growth of the rail network and the growth of the economy. It fails to establish a causal relationship between the railroad and the regional reorganization of trade, the change in the structure of output, the rise in per capita income. (pp. 165-6)*

> *The basic issue posed by this paper is the feasibility of applying the analytical techniques of contemporary economics to the re-evaluation of one of the major questions in American history- the influence of railroads on economic growth. (p. 167)*

> *Thus casual examination of the available data suggests that the social saving attributable to the railroad in the interregional transportation of agricultural products was about 1 per cent of national income. The calculation is, of course, subject to considerable error; but there are grounds for having confidence in the result. (pp. 195-6)*

Example: U.S. railroads and economic growth 50 years later

Donaldson and Hornbeck (2016, QJE) about Fogel' work on railroads and economic growth

> *The article then estimates the aggregate impact of railroads on the agricultural sector in 1890, based on the calculated decline in counties' market access without railroads and the estimated impact of market access on agricultural land values. (p. 801)*

> *Removing all railroads in 1890 is estimated to lower the total value of U.S. agricultural land by 60.2%. This reduction [...] generates annual economic losses equal to 3.22% of GNP, which is moderately larger than comparable social saving estimates by Fogel (1964). (p. 801)*

> *Notably, these and Fogel's estimates neglect many other channels through which railroads may have affected other economic sectors and/or technological growth.* (labour mobility, access to natural resources, etc.) *(p. 801)*

The diffusion of econometrics methods

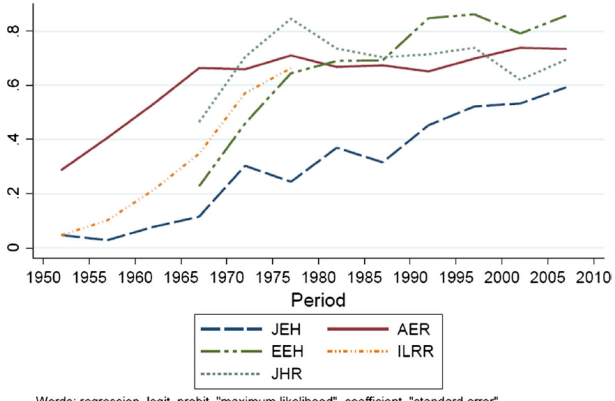


Fig. 1 Five journals: percent at risk using econometric words. *Source*: see text

Sources: Margo (2018).

The diffusion of econometrics methods in Top 5 econ. hist.

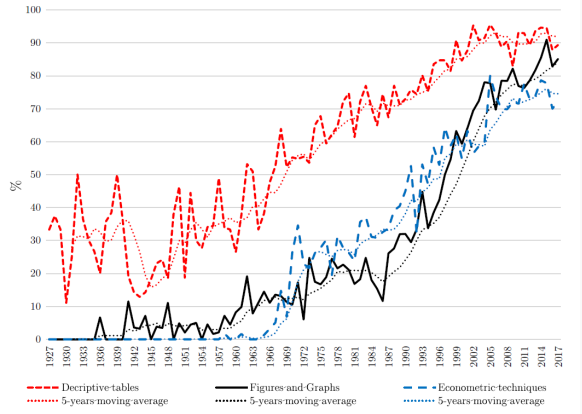


Fig. 6 Presence (%) of tables, figures and econometrics on total articles *Sources*: elaborations on our own database

Sources: Cioni et al. (2020).

Then what about analytic narratives?

- Analytical narrative approach also applies economic theory to shed light on history, but stands in contrast in that it does so without the use of econometrics

- You can still publish in leading economics journals (but it is probably much harder!)
  - Avner Greif and Guido Tabellini (2010). 'Cultural and Institutional Bifurcation: China and Europe Compared'. *American Economic Review* 100.2, pp. 135–40. DOI: 10.1257/aer.100.2.135
  - Diego Puga and Daniel Trefler (2014). 'International Trade and Institutional Change: Medieval Venice's Response to Globalization'. *The Quarterly Journal of Economics* 129.2, pp. 753–821. DOI: 10.1093/qje/qju006
  - Maristella Botticini et al. (2023). 'The Beauty of Uncertainty: The Rise of Insurance Contracts and Markets in Medieval Europe'. *Journal of the European Economic Association* 21.6, pp. 2287–2326. DOI: 10.1093/jeea/jvad059

The 1980s: the decline of cliometrics

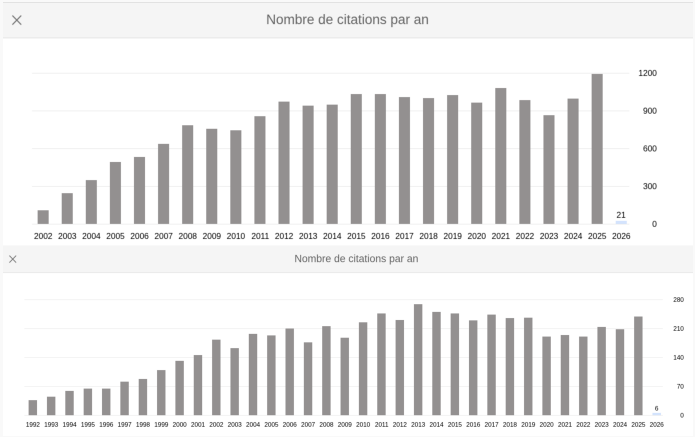
- Heavily criticized for following too closely neo-classical theory + 'one size fits all' approach

- Greif (1997) and Heckman (1997) in an AER issue for the 40 years of cliometrics

  It is an ahistorical approach that deductively assumes that the same preferences, technology, and endowment lead to a unique economic outcome in all historical episodes. [...] The above is not a criticism of the usefulness of neoclassical theory for economic-history analysis. It is a criticism of the use of a single body of theory to direct all economic history analyses for all issues in all past and present economies. (pp. 400-1)

  It is hard enough to provide precise quantitative descriptions of the modem economy, so the goal of precise empirical knowledge about past economies [...] may well have been ill-founded illusions. [...] Quantitative economic history both on this topic and other current social issues is a research area that is too important to neglect. (pp. 405-7)

Why is Acemoglu et al. (2001) so important for economic history?



Sources: Google Scholar, 5 January 2026.

Why is Acemoglu et al. (2001) so important for economic history?

- Document how historical events impact current economic development
- First paper to use modern labor-econ methods to test empirically the role of institutions
  $\Rightarrow$ search for **causal identification**
- Also one of the first paper in econ. to face reproducibility issue $\Rightarrow$ Albouy (2012)
  - out of 64 countries, AJR allocate mortality rate to 36 countries based on conjectures the authors make as to which countries have similar disease environment
  - mortality rate of soldiers rather than settlers
  - much of the variation in the mortality data is due to digestive rather than tropical disease

  $\Longrightarrow$ reply in Acemoglu et al. (2012)

The 2000s: the second 'credibility revolution'

- 1990s $\Rightarrow$ shift from theoretical fictions (models of the economy) to a narrative mode whose hypotheses are chosen to explain a specific situation
  - More and more empirical papers in economics

- Jean Claude Trichet (psdt of the ECB until 2011 [link])

  In the face of the crisis, we felt abandoned by conventional tools. [...] In exercising judgement, we were helped by one of the areas of economic literature: historical analysis.

- $\searrow$ costs of constructing large historical dataset with the development of mass digitisation + GIS (and now HTR and ML)

The 2000s: the second 'credibility revolution'

- Rise of so-called 'natural experiment' papers ⇒ Diamond and Robinson (2010, p. 2)

  This approach consist of comparing [...] different systems that are similar in many respects but that differ with respect to the factors whose influence one wishes to study.

- **Much of what we are going to focus on during the class!** Key issues to be careful of:

  - The direction of causality
  - The influence of omitted variables
  - Non-random assignment of treatment
  - Causal mechanisms

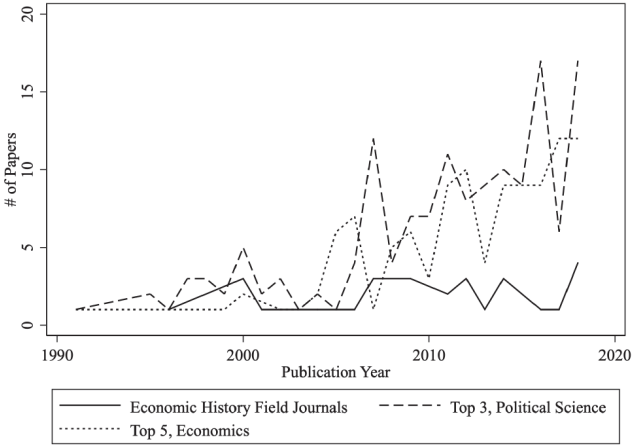


Figure 1: History papers utilizing "Natural Experiments".

Notes: This figure depicts the number of papers focused on historical episodes that are characterized by their authors' as natural experiments over 1990–2019 in three sets of journals: the top-five economics journals, the top-three political science journals, and top field journals in economic history.

The integration of economic history in economics

Table 1 Early publication histories: scholars in economic history and labor economics

Ph.D. decade	P (Book) > 0	Mean number of books if > 0	Mean number of articles	Percent of articles in top-five economics journals	Percent of articles in other economics journals	Percent of articles in economic history journals	Percent of articles in non-economics academic journals	N
Panel A: economic history sample #1: prominent economic historians[a]								
1950–1969	0.81	1.23	10.6	10.1%	26.2% [36.3]	50.3%	13.4%	14
1970–1979	0.76	1.38	14.8	5.2	20.6 [25.8]	53.2	21.0	17
1980–1989	0.67	1.17	12.2	13.8	26.7 [40.5]	42.2	17.2	9
1990–1999	0.50	1.33	14.8	14.6	24.8 [39.4]	43.8	16.9	6
2000–2009	0.22	1.00	14.6	23.1	52.1 [75.2]	19.8	5.0	9

Ph.D. decade	P(Book) > 0	Mean number of books if > 0	Mean number of journal articles	Percent of articles in top-five economics journals	Percent of articles in other economics journals	Percent of articles in economic history journals	Percent of articles in non-economics academic journals	N
Panel B: economic history sample #2: EHA dissertation conveners[b]								
1950–1969	0.67	1.33	7.4	7.5%	16.4% [23.9]	52.2%	23.9%	9
1970–1979	0.67	1.33	12.6	1.8	24.8 [26.6]	57.7	15.9	9
1980–1989	0.61	1.09	13.3	6.3	20.8 [27.1]	53.3	19.6	18
1990–1999	0.31	1.20	10.7	7.2	18.0 [25.2]	48.9	25.9	13
2000–2009	0.11	1.00	11.2	10.9	47.5 [58.4]	36.6	5.0	9

Sources: Margo (2018).

The 2010s: The rise of historical persistence

Cirone and Pepinsky (2022) List of 195 articles in the study

- Embraces research designs that, as much as possible, distinguish causal effects of interest from other sorts of historical legacies and structural, geographic, or institutional factors

- Focus on statistical correlations– rather than analytical narrative– that are given causal meaning through precise research designs
  - Trace out the causal consequences of a historical variable on long-term economic or political outcomes
  - Famous example: Nunn (2008, QJE), *Long-term Effects of Africa's Slave Trades*

I find a robust negative relationship between the number of slaves exported from a country and current economic performance. (p. 139)

Persistence studies in economics and political science

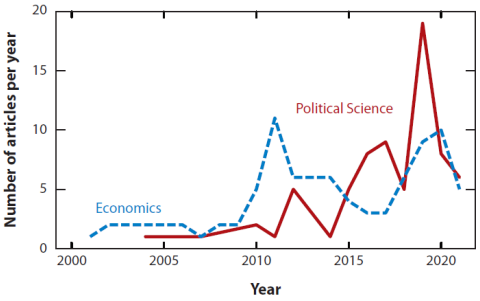


Figure 1

Numbers of historical persistence articles published in five economics journals (*dashed blue line*) and nine political science journals (*solid red line*) from 2000 to May 2021. Historical persistence rose in prominence in economics beginning in the mid-2000s and peaked in the mid-2010s. Its rise in political science followed about a decade later. Source data are provided in **Supplemental Table 1**.

Economic history and persistence studies in economics

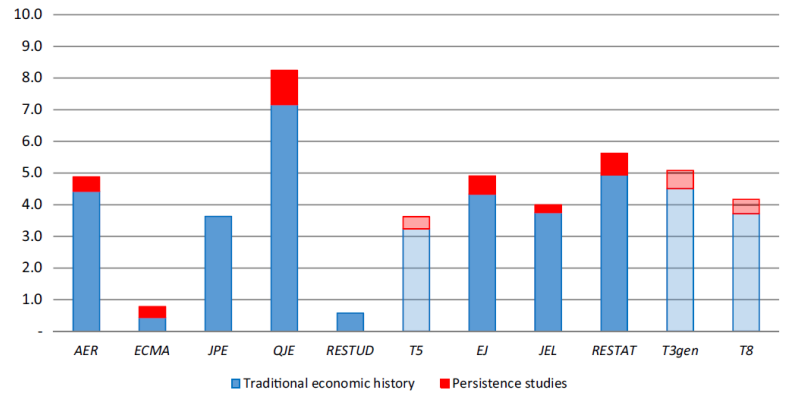


Fig. 2 Share of economic history articles in the T8 (2001–2018). *Source*: our own elaborations

Sources: Cioni et al. (2023).

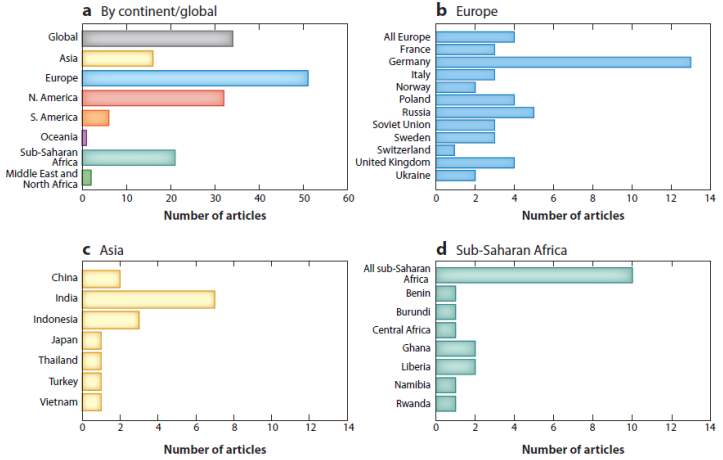
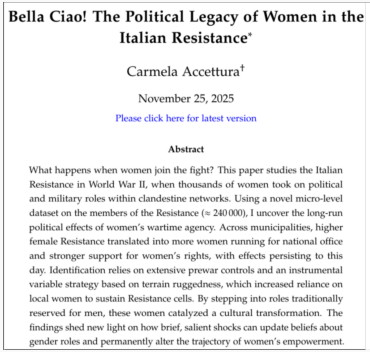


Figure 2

Numbers of historical persistence articles sorted by world region (*a*) and within the regions of Europe, Asia, and sub-Saharan Africa (*b*–*d*). Articles were coded by country and world region according to their main empirical content. The entry of "Global" (*a*) counts the number of articles whose empirical coverage was the entire world rather than focusing on one world region. The entries for "all Europe" (*b*) and "all sub-Saharan Africa" (*d*) count the number of articles whose empirical coverage is the entire region rather than one country within it. Source data are provided in **Supplemental Table 1**.

The 2020s: The double revolution?

- Third 'credibility revolution' in applied econ. (new DiD literature, Replication, etc.)
- Automated data collection (LLMs) (low cost (compared to RAs) and low technicity (compared to ML))



Bella Ciao! The Political Legacy of Women in the Italian Resistance*

Carmela Accettura†

November 25, 2025

Please click here for latest version

Abstract

What happens when women join the fight? This paper studies the Italian Resistance in World War II, when thousands of women took on political and military roles within clandestine networks. Using a novel micro-level dataset on the members of the Resistance (≈ 240 000), I uncover the long-run political effects of women's wartime agency. Across municipalities, higher female Resistance translated into more women running for national office and stronger support for women's rights, with effects persisting to this day. Identification relies on extensive prewar controls and an instrumental variable strategy based on terrain ruggedness, which increased reliance on local women to sustain Resistance cells. By stepping into roles traditionally reserved for men, these women catalyzed a cultural transformation. The findings shed new light on how brief, salient shocks can update beliefs about gender roles and permanently alter the trajectory of women's empowerment.



The Defender on the Move:
Black Newspapers and the Great Migration

Avinash Moorthy*

November 20, 2025

Link to newest version

Abstract

After 50 years of limited migration following emancipation, 1.5 million Black southerners made the journey north during the First Great Migration from 1915 to 1940. Over the same period, Black political organization in the South surged and racial violence fell. I examine whether information on northern life and jobs sparked Black migration and southern activism using quasi-random variation in exposure to the Chicago Defender, the most prominent northern Black newspaper. Classifying the coverage of thousands of southern newspapers, I show that information about the North was limited prior to the Chicago Defender's entry in the mid-1910s. To reach southern readers, the Chicago Defender partnered with Black railway porters working for the Illinois Central railroad. In cities along the railroad, I find that individuals who lived near a porter selling the Chicago Defender were 33% more likely to migrate north than similar individuals who did not. These individuals pulled relatives to migrate, consistent with information diffusion across social networks, and moved to cities that received more coverage in articles, ads, and job postings. Counties with access to the Chicago Defender were 1.5 times more likely to form an NAACP branch and experienced 1.4 times fewer lynchings.



The Role of Political Connections in Employment: Evidence from US Elections 1850–1930 *

Madeleine Ho†

University of California, Davis

November 4, 2025

Abstract

This paper investigates the causal effect of election to political office on the employment outcomes of politicians' networks using a close-elections regression discontinuity design applied to United States gubernatorial and congressional races from 1850 to 1930. Using a combination of fuzzy matching, hand matching, and a prediction algorithm, I construct a novel dataset linking election returns to full-count U.S. Census records, allowing me to trace the children and childhood neighbors of candidates over time. I find that the children of winners experience between an 18 to 28 log point increase in occupational earnings in the nearest post-election Census but that these effects fade by the second. Children who are college age at election are also more likely to report being in school, though these effect are not present for other cohorts. In contrast, childhood neighbors—who represent weaker, proximity-based ties—are about 2 percentage points more likely to work in the public sector, particularly in the postal service and local government. However, they experience only a modest increase in earnings. I then argue that these results suggest that political access likely confers temporary social advantages that operate through networks rather than through a pure income effect or changes to occupational preferences but that the channels through which they operate vary greatly with relationship type. This paper provides new evidence on the persistence of political advantages over time and uncovers how the mechanisms linking political access to employment outcomes differ between strong and weak ties.

Bonus: A field not so distant from HPE

Charnysh et al. (2023) identify 3 motivations behind the ↗ of HPE

- Articles predominantly concerned with understanding the past for its own sake ⇒ history has intrinsic value
- Articles that used History to explain variation in present-day outcomes ⇒ legacy of history (importance of the mechanism)
- Articles using the past as a setting to explore theoretical conjectures ⇒ history as an ideal setting

Topics studied in HPE

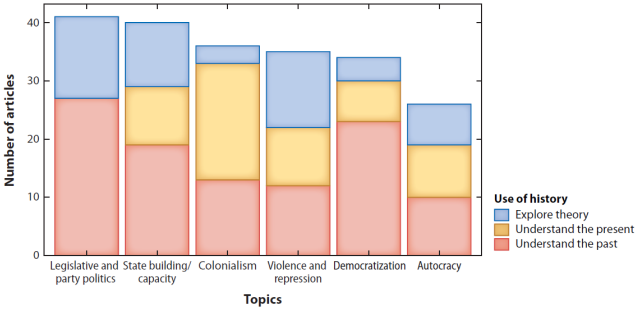


Figure 4

In historical political economy research published during 2010–2021 by the eight top political science journals reviewed, the six most prominent topics were legislative/party politics, state building/capacity, colonialism, violence/repression, democratization, and autocracy. Some articles cover more than one topic (e.g., colonialism and state building). Within each topic, history is used in various ways: to explore theory (*blue*), to understand the present (*gold*), or to understand the past (*pink*).

Sources: Charnysh et al. (2023).

Trends in HPE in top journals

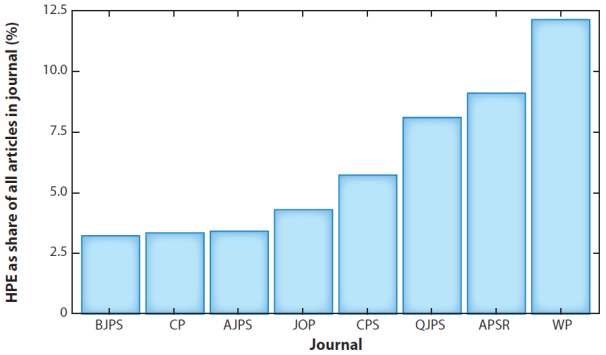


Figure 2

Prevalence of historical political economy (HPE) research by journal relative to the total number of articles published in each journal, 2010–2021. Abbreviations: AJPS, *American Journal of Political Science*; APSR, *American Political Science Review*; BJPS, *British Journal of Political Science*; CP, *Comparative Politics*; CPS, *Comparative Political Studies*; JOP, *Journal of Politics*; QJPS, *Quarterly Journal of Political Science*; WP, *World Politics*.

Mapping the evolution of economic history

Mapping the evolution of economic history

- Martina Cioni et al. (2020). 'The Long-term Evolution of Economic History: Evidence from the Top Five Field Journals (1927–2017)'. *Cliometrica* 14, pp. 1–39. DOI: 10.1007/s11698-019-00186-x
  - 6,516 articles published in EHR, JEH, EEH, EREH, and Cliometrica between 1929 and 2017
  - Home bias remains strong: predominant focus on North-America and the UK
  - The relevance of topic remains stable (except ↘ methodology; ↗ standards of living)
  - Cliometric Revolution took quite a long time to fully display its effects

Gender imbalance

Topics studied in econ. hist. journals

Table 3 Classification and share of articles' topics by period

Category/topic	Description	1927–1940	1941–1960	1961–1996	1997–2017
Methodology		16.2	13.0	3.9	1.2
EH	Economic history as discipline	14.9	6.6	2.7	0.9
HET	History of economic thought	1.3	6.4	1.2	0.2
Institutions		15.6	9.2	8.6	13.3
Institutions	Institutions, regulation, role of culture and religion, empires and imperial expansion. Electoral issues and general politics, war	15.6	9.2	8.6	13.3
Macro-approach		21.4	23.1	25.7	22.3
Growth	Growth, national accounts and economic fluctuations. General economic history (also industrialization process) of a specific geographical area (continent, country and region)	9.1	11.3	12.7	10.5
Macroeconomic and monetary policies	Monetary and fiscal policy, central banking	1.3	4.0	6.4	5.6
Trade	Trade and trade policies. Market integration (commodities)	11.0	7.8	6.6	6.2
Micro-approach		33.8	43.8	37.2	33.2
Agriculture	Agriculture (including forestry and fishing), land policy, natural resources, energy and environmental history	11.7	10.3	10.9	5.7
Finance	Banking and financial systems, private investment and capital markets (domestic and international, including integration) and credit regulation	6.5	7.4	8.3	12.4
Firm	Business history on specific companies in industry and banking, entrepreneurship	5.2	8.3	2.3	1.8
Industry	Manufacturing, mining and construction. Industrial policy	7.1	11.4	9.4	6.3
Innovation	Innovation and technology	1.9	1.6	3.0	3.8
Services	Insurance, transportation (roads, railways and canals) including construction. Retailing	1.3	4.8	3.2	3.1
Personal conditions and behaviour		13.0	10.8	24.5	30.0
Human capital	Human capital and education	–	0.1	1.5	3.1
Income distribution	Inequality and wealth distribution	0.6	0.4	1.6	3.1
Labour	Labour force (including gender issue), slavery (including trade), industrial relations and trade unions, welfare state (including pensions)	5.2	6.0	10.1	6.7
Population and demography	Demographic behaviour (birth, marriage and mortality), famines and their demographic effects, migrations, urbanization and city growth	2.6	1.7	4.4	4.6
Standard of living	Wages, consumption, biological standard of living (heights, wellness and health)	4.5	2.6	6.9	12.6
Total		100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Number of articles		154	769	3173	2420

Sources Our own database

Countries studied in econ. hist. journals

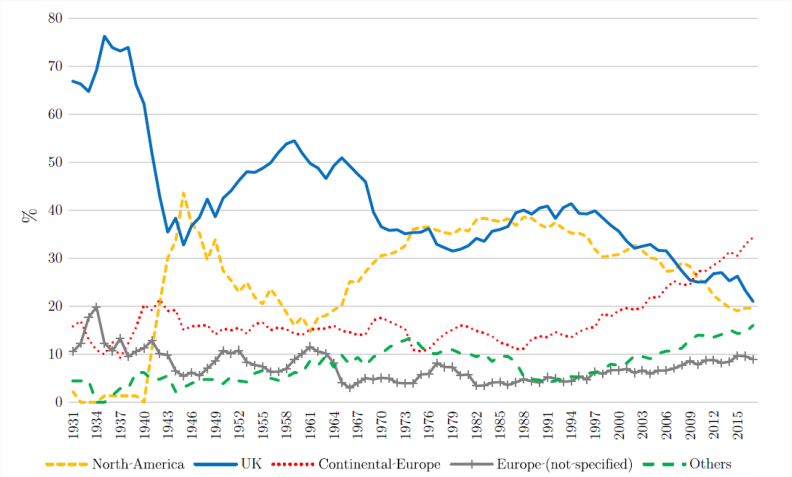


Fig. 5 Share of articles by continents (5-year moving average) *Sources*: elaborations on our own database

The structure of econ. hist. in Europe

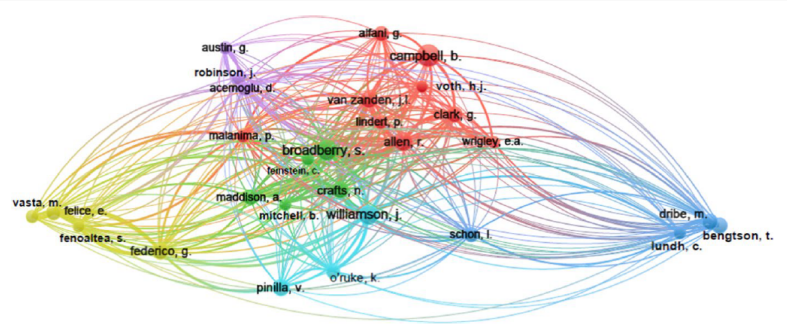


Fig. 5 Authors cited in articles coauthored by at least one individual awarded a Ph.D. in economic history from a European university

Sources: Fernández-de-Pinedo et al. (2023).

Notes: 11,143 articles (co)authored by 919 economic historians between 1980 and 2019 + biographic information!

The structure of econ. hist. in the U.S.

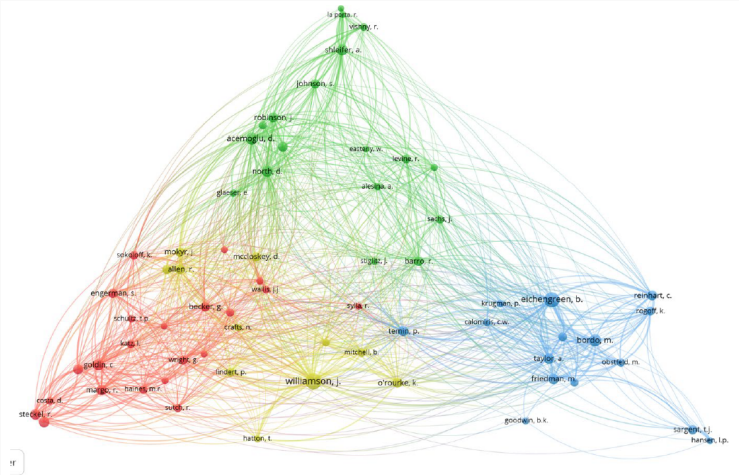


Fig. 6 Authors cited in articles coauthored by at least one individual awarded a Ph.D. in economics from a North American university

Male-Female imbalance in authorship at EHR

Table 11. *Male and female authorship*

Period	*Totals*			*Percentages*	
	Male	*Female*	*Both sexes*	*Male*	*Female*
1948-9	34	0	34	100	0
1950-9	254.3	14.7	269	94.5	5.5
1960-9	289	20	309	93.5	6.5
1970-9	335.5	21.5	357	94.0	6.0
1980-9	281	27	308	91.2	8.8
1990-7	229.8	36.2	266	86.4	13.6

Note: The data refer to articles, short articles and revisions, as in tab. 9 and tab. 10, plus essays in bibliography and criticism.

Sources: Wrigley (1999).

Back

Male-Female imbalance in authorship at AEHR

Table 9. Authorship characteristics, per cent of pages published

	1956–60	1961–70	1971–80	1981–90	1991–2000	2001–10
Gender†						
Male	89.7	88.8	96.7	94.4	90.6	86.2
Female	10.3	11.2	3.3	5.6	9.4	13.8
Authorship‡						
Sole author	100	92.6	94.8	88.0	88.7	74.8
Two authors	0	7.4	5.2	8.4	9.6	18.5
Three authors	0	0.0	0.0	3.6	1.7	5.2
Four authors	0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	1.5

Notes: †For gender, the estimate excludes anonymous articles and articles where the gender of the author was unknown (a total of 5.5 per cent of all authors). ‡Only named-authored articles included; anonymous introductions, for example, are not.

Sources: Morgan and Shanahan (2010).

Back

Similar trends in Economics

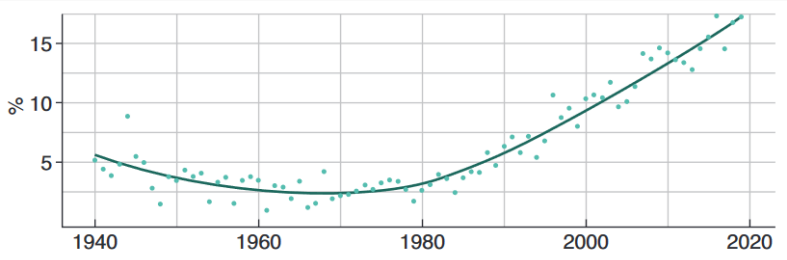


Figure 1. Percentage of women publishing in influential general interest journals. Figure plots female authors as a percentage of all authors published in the *AER*, *ECA*, the *EJ*, the *JPE*, the *QJE*, and *REStud* by year. Lines of fit estimated using a quadratic LOESS model (smoothing span $\alpha = 0.75$).

Sources: Hengel and Phythian-Adam (2022).

Back

The integration of econ. hist. in economics in the U.S.

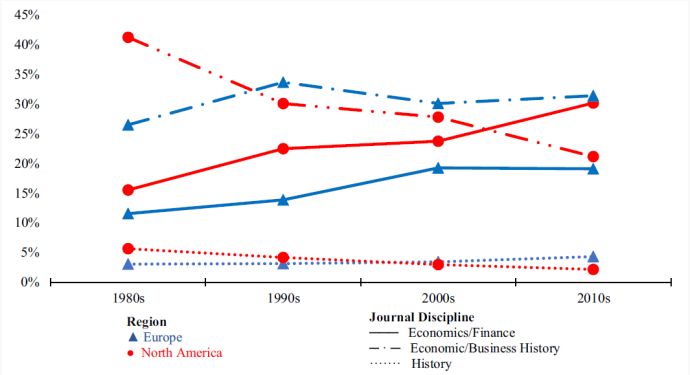


Fig. 1 Percentage of articles published by economic historians in EFJs, EBHJs, and HJs, by decade and region

Sources: Fernández-de-Pinedo et al. (2023).

Notes: 11,143 articles (co)authored by 919 economic historians between 1980 and 2019 + biographic information!

Which publication profile?

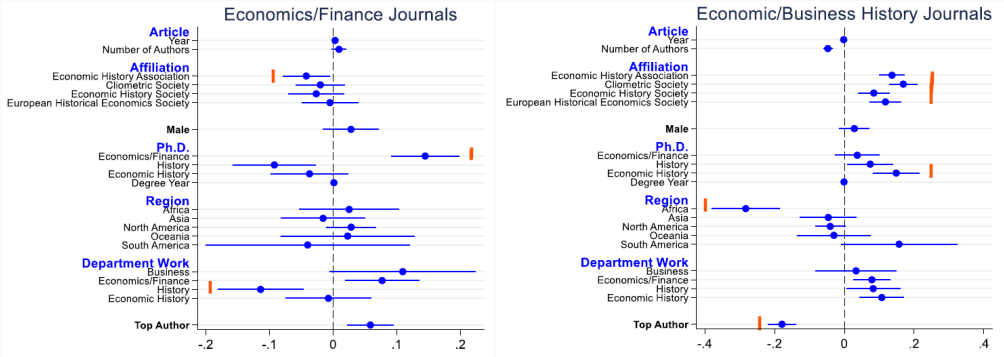


Figure 1: Average marginal effects for the probability of publishing in EFJs, and EBHJs (95% C.I.)

Sources: Fernández-de-Pinedo et al. (2023).

The share of econ. hist. in economics journals

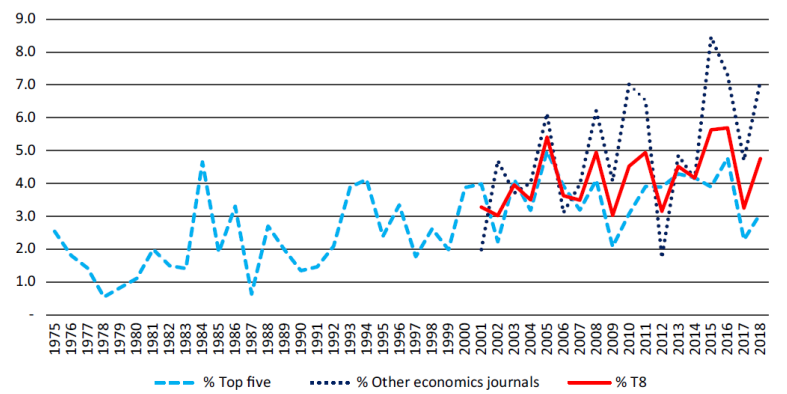


Fig. 1 Share of economic history articles by different groups of journals (1975–2018). *Source*: for economic history articles, 1975–2000, Abramitzky (2015); 2001–2018 our own data; for universe: 1975–2000, Card and DellaVigna (2013, Appendix); 2001–2018 our own data

Sources: Cioni et al. (2023).

The over-representation of the U.S. in Top 5

Table 6 Share of contributions by area of affiliation (2001–2018)

Area	T-ec.hist	Top five	Other economics journals	T8
Continental Europe	31.5	12.7	21.6	16.8
UK	23.7	4.7	15.0	9.4
USA	32.0	78.8	53.1	67.0
Other Anglo-Saxon countries	7.1	1.9	6.0	3.8
Rest of the world	5.7	1.9	4.3	3.0
Total	100	100	100	100

Source: our own elaborations

Sources: Cioni et al. (2023).

$\Longrightarrow$ 2/3 of the authors of economic history articles in the T8 and 4/5 in the top 5 are affiliated with American universities!

Impact on citations

Table 9 Average and median citations per year (2001–2018)

Journal	Traditional economic history		Persistence studies		Total	
	Average	Median	Average	Median	Average	Median
CLIO	1.0	0.7			1.0	0.7
EEH	1.3	0.9			1.3	0.9
EHR	1.6	1.1			1.6	1.1
EREH	1.3	0.9			1.3	0.9
JEH	1.6	1.2			1.6	1.2
T-ec.hist	**1.4**	**1.0**			**1.4**	**1.0**
AER	7.4	4.8	37.8	10.7	10.3	5.3
ECMA	4.1	4.0	14.4	13.7	8.6	4.8
JPE	6.2	4.4			6.2	4.4
QJE	13.1	8.2	27.0	19.0	14.9	10.1
RESTUD	12.2	7.6			12.2	7.6
Top five	**8.9**	**5.2**	**29.2**	**15.7**	**11.1**	**5.9**
EJ	4.1	2.6	4.5	2.6	4.1	2.6
JEL	10.6	4.4	97.8	97.8	16.1	4.8
RESTAT	4.8	2.8	6.3	4.0	5.0	3.0
Other economics journals	**5.1**	**3.0**	**10.3**	**4.0**	**5.6**	**3.1**
T8	**7.2**	**3.9**	**20.2**	**8.3**	**8.6**	**4.2**

Bold values indicates sub-total and total number of articles by group of journals

Source: our own elaborations on data on references retrieved from Scopus between 13 and 18 May 2019

The 3 economic history tribes

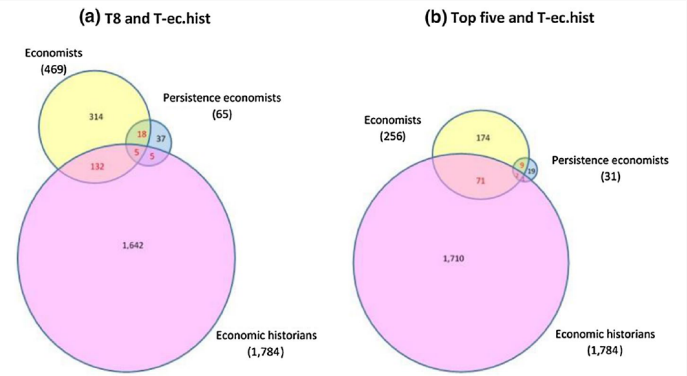


Fig. 3 The three tribes: size and relationships (2001–2018). *Source*: our own elaborations. *Notes*: circle size indicates the number of scholars in each group; the pink circle refers to scholars publishing in economic history journals; the yellow and blue circles refer to scholars publishing in economics journals (respectively, 'economists', those publishing 'traditional economic history' articles and 'persistent economists' those publishing 'persistence studies' articles)

Sources: Cioni et al. (2023).

Some final advises

Geloso (2018, p. 27):

> *For those who consider venturing down the path of becoming an economic historian, my suggestion is to read voraciously in both economic theory and historical topics. Do the two simultaneously. The economic theory will allow you to see economic puzzles in historical events. Eventually, you will find a topic that fascinates you. Within that topic, pick a question. It would be best if you start with a modest one in order to use it as a training tool.*

What is reproducibility?

What is reproducibility?

- Draw heavily on the work of Lars Vilhuber (chief data editor for the AEA)
- Cacioppo et al. (2015)

Reproducibility

[T]he ability [...] to duplicate the results of a prior study using the same materials and procedures as were used by the original investigator (p. 3)

Replicability

[T]he ability of a researcher to duplicate the results of a prior study if the same procedures are followed but new data are collected (p. 4)

Cool Youtube video on the stakes of reproducibility

The Good, the Bad and the Ugly link

Good.

- Meaningful sub directories
- top level `README`
- code/data/output are separated

```
.
├── README.md
├── code
│   ├── R
│   │   ├── 0-install.R
│   │   ├── 1-main.R
│   │   ├── 2-figure2.R
│   │   └── 3-table2.R
│   ├── stata
│   │   ├── 1-main.do
│   │   ├── 2-read_raw.do
│   │   ├── 3-figure1.do
│   │   ├── 4-figure2.do
│   │   └── 5-table1.do
│   └── tex
│       ├── appendix.tex
│       └── main.tex
├── data
│   ├── processed
│   └── raw
└── output
    ├── plots
    └── tables
```

Not So Good.

- Sub directories are not helpful
- File names are confusing
- no `README`
- code/data/output are *not* separated

```
.
├── 20211107ext_2v1.do
├── 20220120ext_2v1.do
├── 20221101wave1.dta
├── james
│   └── NLSY97
│       └── nlsy97_v2.do
├── mary
│   └── NLSY97
│       └── nlsy97.do
├── matlab_fortran
│   ├── graphs
│   ├── sensitivity1
│   │   ├── data.xlsx
│   │   ├── good_version.do
│   │   └── script.m
│   └── sensitivity2
│       ├── models.f90
│       ├── models.mod
│       └── nrtype.f90
├── readme.do
├── scatter1.eps
├── scatter1_1.eps
```

What is not a data citation

Many authors initially neglect to add data citations, or do not know how to add a data citation. Often, we see authors cite papers with supplementary data, but not databases or other data:

> *We use data acquired from the NHL, dates of power outages collected by Tremblay et al (2018), augmented with information on the language and grammar skills of hockey players provided by the Ethnologue database.*

(note absence of citation for NHL and Ethnologue data). In the above example, three datasets are used, but only one is cited in some fashion.

Better

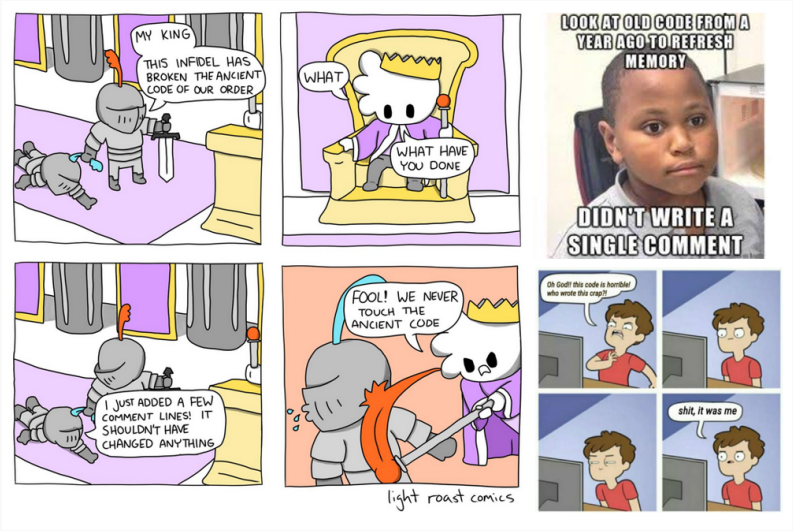
The above example can be improved as follows:

> *We use data acquired from the NHL (NHL, 2018), dates of power outages collected by Tremblay et al (2018, 2019), augmented with information on the language and grammar skills of hockey players provided by the Ethnologue database (Eberhard et al, 2019).*

with the reference list having the following entries:

> Eberhard, David M., Gary F. Simons, and Charles D. Fennig (eds.). 2019. *Ethnologue: Languages of the*

Don't be ugly: do comment your code!



Additional resources on reproducibility

- Website of the Social Science Data Editors (by Lars Vilhuber):
  `https://social-science-data-editors.github.io/guidance/addtl-data-citation-guidance.html`
- Website of the EJ data editor: `https://ejdataeditor.github.io`
- Website of the AEA Data Editor:
  `https://aeadataeditor.github.io/aea-de-guidance`
- Website of the Institute for Replication (I4R):
  `https://i4replication.org/index.html`

Recommended readings

- Claudia Goldin (1995). 'Cliometrics and the Nobel'. *Journal of Economic Perspectives* 9.2, pp. 191–208. DOI: 10.1257/jep.9.2.191

- Martina Cioni et al. (2023). 'Is Economic History Changing its Nature? Evidence from Top Journals'. *Cliometrica* 17, pp. 23–48. DOI: 10.1007/s11698-022-00242-z

- Garret Christensen and Edward Miguel (2018). 'Transparency, Reproducibility, and the Credibility of Economics Research'. *Journal of Economic Literature* 56.3, pp. 920–980. DOI: 10.1257/jel.20171350

Questions?

CONTACT: cedric.chambru@ens-lyon.fr

References I

Acemoglu, Daron, Simon Johnson and James A. Robinson (2001). 'The Colonial Origins of Comparative Development: An Empirical Investigation'. *American Economic Review* 91.5, pp. 1369–1401. DOI: 10.1257/aer.91.5.1369.

Acemoglu, Daron, Simon Johnson and James A. Robinson (2012). 'The Colonial Origins of Comparative Development: An Empirical Investigation: Reply'. *American Economic Review* 102.6, pp. 3077–3110. DOI: 10.1257/aer.102.6.3077.

Albouy, David Y. (2012). 'The Colonial Origins of Comparative Development: An Empirical Investigation: Comment'. *American Economic Review* 102.6, pp. 3059–3076. DOI: 10.1257/aer.102.6.3059.

Antipa, Pamfili and Vincent Bignon (2018). 'Whither Economic History? Between Narratives and Quantification'. *Revue de l'OFCE* 157.3, pp. 17–36. DOI: 10.3917/reof.157.0017.

References II

Berk, Jonathan B., R. Harvey Campbell and David Hirshleifer (2017). 'How to Write an Effective Referee Report and Improve the Scientific Review Process'. *Journal of Economic Perspectives,* 31.1, pp. 231–244. DOI: 10.1257/jep.31.1.231.

Botticini, Maristella, Pietro Buri and Massimo Marinacci (2023). 'The Beauty of Uncertainty: The Rise of Insurance Contracts and Markets in Medieval Europe'. *Journal of the European Economic Association* 21.6, pp. 2287–2326. DOI: 10.1093/jeea/jvad059.

Cacioppo, John .T, Robert M. Kaplan, Jon A. Krosnick, James L. Olds and Heather Dean (2015). *Social, Behavioral, and Economic Sciences Perspectives on Robust and Reliable Science*. Report of the Subcommittee on Replicability in Science Advisory Committee to the National Science Foundation Directorate for Social, Behavioral, and Economic Sciences. National Science Foundation.

Charnysh, Volha, Eugene Finkel and Scott Gehlbach (2023). 'Historical Political Economy: Past, Present, and Future'. *Annual Review of Political Science* 26, pp. 175–91. DOI: 10.1146/annurev-polisci-051921-102440.

References III

Christensen, Garret and Edward Miguel (2018). 'Transparency, Reproducibility, and the Credibility of Economics Research'. *Journal of Economic Literature* 56.3, pp. 920–980. DOI: 10.1257/jel.20171350.

Cioni, Martina, Giovanni Federico and Michelangelo Vasta (2020). 'The Long-term Evolution of Economic History: Evidence from the Top Five Field Journals (1927–2017)'. *Cliometrica* 14, pp. 1–39. DOI: 10.1007/s11698-019-00186-x.

Cioni, Martina, Giovanni Federico and Michelangelo Vasta (2023). 'Is Economic History Changing its Nature? Evidence from Top Journals'. *Cliometrica* 17, pp. 23–48. DOI: 10.1007/s11698-022-00242-z.

Cirone, Alexandra and Thomas B. Pepinsky (2022). 'Historical Persistence'. *Annual Review of Political Science* 25, pp. 241–259. DOI: 10.1146/annurev-polisci-051120-104325.

Conrad, Alfred H. and John R. Meyer (1958). 'The Economics of Slavery in the Antebellum South'. *Journal of Political Economy* 66.2, pp. 95–130.

References IV

Diamond, Jared and James A. Robinson, eds. (2010). *Natural Experiments of History*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, p. 288.

Dippel, Christian and Bryan Leonard (2021). 'Not-so-Natural Experiments in History'. *Journal of Historical Political Economy* 1, pp. 1–30. DOI: 10.1561/115.00000001.

Donaldson, Dave and Richard Hornbeck (2016). 'Railroads and American Economic Growth: A "Market Access" Approach'. *The Quarterly Journal of Economics* 131.2, pp. 799–858. DOI: 10.1093/qje/qjw002.

Engerman Stanley, L. (1966). 'The Economic Impact of the Civil War'. *Explorations in Entrepreneurial History* 3, pp. 176–199. DOI: 10.3406/rnord.1984.4025.

Fernández-de-Pinedo, Nadia, Alvaro La Parra-Perez and Félix-Fernando Muñoz (2023). 'Recent Trends in Publications of Economic Historians in Europe and North America (1980–2019): an Empirical Analysis'. *Ciometrica* 12, pp. 1–22. DOI: 10.1007/s11698-022-00245-w.

References V

Fogel, Robert W. (1962). 'A Quantitative Approach to the Study of Railroads in American Economic Growth: A Report of Some Preliminary Findings'. *The Journal of Economic History* 22.2, pp. 163–197. DOI: 10.1017/S0022050700062719.

Fogel, Robert W. (1964). *Railroads and American Economic Growth: Essays*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Press, p. 296.

Geloso, Vincent J. (2018). 'Economics, Economic History and Historical Data'. In: *An Economist's Guide to Economic History*. Ed. by Matthias Blum and Christopher L. Colvin. Cham.: Palgrave Macmillan, pp. 21–30. DOI: 10.1007/978-3-319-96568-0.

Goldin, Claudia (1995). 'Cliometrics and the Nobel'. *Journal of Economic Perspectives* 9.2, pp. 191–208. DOI: 10.1257/jep.9.2.191.

Greif, Avner (1997). 'Cliometrics After 40 Years'. *American Economic Review* 87.2, pp. 400–403.

References VI

Greif, Avner and Guido Tabellini (2010). 'Cultural and Institutional Bifurcation: China and Europe Compared'. *American Economic Review* 100.2, pp. 135–40. DOI: 10.1257/aer.100.2.135.

Heckman, James J. (1997). 'The Value of Quantitative Evidence on the Effect of the Past on the Present'. *American Economic Review* 87.2, pp. 404–408.

Hengel, Erin and Sarah Louisa Phythian-Adam (2022). 'A Historical Portrait of Female Economists' Coauthorship Networks'. *History of Political Economy* 54, pp. 17–41. DOI: 10.1215/00182702-10085601.

Margo, Robert A. (2018). 'The Integration of Economic History into Economics'. *Cliometrica* 12, pp. 377–406. DOI: 10.1007/s11698-018-0170-8.

Mokyr, Joel, ed. (2003). *The Oxford Encyclopedia of Economic History*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, p. 2730. DOI: 10.1093/acref/9780195105070.001.0001.

References VII

Morgan, Stephen and Martin Shanahan (2010). 'The Supply of Economic History in Australia: The Australian Economic History Review at 50'. *Australian Economic History Review* 50.3, pp. 217–326. DOI: 10.1111/j.1467-8446.2010.00303.x.

North, Douglass C. (1981). *Structure and Change in Economic History*. New York: W. W. Norton, p. 240.

Puga, Diego and Daniel Trefler (2014). 'International Trade and Institutional Change: Medieval Venice's Response to Globalization'. *The Quarterly Journal of Economics* 129.2, pp. 753–821. DOI: 10.1093/qje/qju006.

Wrigley, E. Anthony (1999). 'The Review During the Last 50 Years'. *The Economic History Review*, pp. 1–21. DOI: 10.2307/204276.