

JOHN W.E. CREMIN

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Position:

Postdoctoral Fellow at the Aix-Marseille School of Economics from September 2024

Education:

2024	Ph.D. Economics	Columbia University
2021	MPhil Economics	Columbia University
2020	M.A. Economics	Columbia University
2018	M.A. Economics	Cambridge University

Honors and Awards:

2015-2016, Dissertation Fellowship, Department of Economics, Columbia University

Fields of Specialization:

Primary Field: Microeconomic Theory (especially Social Learning)
Secondary Field: The Economics of Networks

Job Market Paper: Too Much Information & The Death of Consensus

Abstract: Modern society is increasingly polarized, even on purely factual questions, despite greater access to information than ever. In a model of sequential social learning, I study the impact of motivated reasoning on information aggregation. This is a belief formation process in which agents trade-off accuracy against ideological convenience. I find that even Bayesian agents only learn in very highly connected networks, where agents have arbitrarily large neighbourhoods asymptotically. This is driven by the fact that motivated agents sometimes reject information that can be inferred from their neighbours' actions when it refutes their desired beliefs. Observing any finite neighbourhood, there is always some probability that all of an agent's neighbours will have disregarded information thus. Moreover, I establish that consensus, where all agents eventually choose the same action, is only possible with relatively uninformative private signals and low levels of motivated reasoning.

Working Paper: Online Partisanship and Learning through Anonymous Speech

Abstract: The intense partisanship of social media is often remarked upon in modern political discourse, here I show that exaggerated partisanship is to be expected when non-partisan agents dislike to be caught making incorrect statements publicly. This is exacerbated by more limited information, and more extreme punishment for errors. I suggest the introduction of *partial* anonymous commenting as a solution.

Works in Progress:

Social Learning with Rational inattention:

Observing the views of others takes time and effort, yet in social learning it is typically assumed that we observe all those to whom we are connected for free. I investigate a model in which agents are rationally inattentive: they pay a certain cognitive cost to acquire private information, but must also pay to observe those to whom they are connected. In social networks where the cost of observation is decreasing in the strength of a given connection, I investigate the network and information conditions required for complete learning. I also analyze whether increasing or decreasing the connectivity of the network increases or decreases asymptotic accuracy, and under what circumstances.

Network Formation, Belief Consonance & Latte-drinking Liberals (with Evan Sadler):

That ideological beliefs and lifestyle choices go hand in hand is well established empirically, but lacking theoretical explanation. Considering agents with a preference for belief and lifestyle consonance, we investigate under what circumstances ideological polarization produces a belief-lifestyle affinity in stochastically stable networks.

Research and Work Experience:

Research Assistant for Evan Sadler Academic Year 2022-23
Research Assistant for Navin Kartik Spring 2021
Research Assistant for Andrew Kosenko Fall 2021

I have acted as a Referee for the Journal of Economic Theory.

Teaching Experience:

I have worked as a Teaching Fellow for the following classes:

Fall 2019: Introduction to Econometrics UN3412, Professor Jushan Bai
Spring 2020: Introduction to Econometrics UN3412, Professor Thomas Piskula
Fall 2020: Principles of Economics UN1105, Professor Sunil Gulati
Spring 2021: Market Design GU4260, Professor Guillaume Haeringer
Fall 2021: Market Design GU4260, Professor Guillaume Haeringer
Spring 2022: Behavioral Economics GU4840, Professor Mark Dean

Teaching Evaluations are available upon request.

Languages:

English (Native), French (Intermediate)

References:

Evan Sadler

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