Charles Gauthier

Department of Economics
Social Science Centre
University of Western Ontario
London, Ontario, Canada, N6A 5C2

Phone: +1 (581) 997-1859
Email: cgauth26@uwo.ca
Website: www.charlesgauthier.me

Placement Officer: Elizabeth Caucutt, ecaucutt@uwo.ca

Citizenship: Canadian
Research Interests: Applied Econometrics, Applied Microeconomics
Teaching Interests: Microeconomics, Econometrics, Computational Economics

Education

Ph.D., Economics, University of Western Ontario, Canada	2016–present
M.A., Economics, University of Toronto, Canada	2016
B.A., Economics and Mathematics, Université Laval, Canada	2015
Degree in Economics, Université Laval, Canada	2012–2013

Research Papers

Price Search and Consumption Inequality: Robust, Credible and Valid Inference (Job Market Paper)

Robust Inference on Discount Factors

Work in Progress

Choice under Uncertainty: Expected Utility and Risk aversion, joint with Victor Aguiar and Nail Kashaev

Teaching Experience

Teaching Assistant, University of Western Ontario 2016–2020
- Intermediate Microeconomics I (Honors)
- Intermediate Microeconomic Theory I
- Intermediate Microeconomics II
- Econometrics I
- Econometrics II (Honors)
- Intermediate Econometrics II
- Principals of Mathematical Economics
- Principles of Microeconomics/Macroeconomics

Teaching Assistant, University of Toronto 2015–2016
- Introductory Economics

Teaching Assistant, Université Laval Fall 2013
- Quantitative Methods for Economists

Research Experience

Research Assistant for Varouj A. Aivazian, University of Toronto	Summer 2016

Fellowships and Awards

Graduate Fellowship	2021
Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council Doctoral Fellowship	2020–2021
Ontario Graduate Scholarships	2019–2020
Ontario Graduate Scholarships	2018-2019
Western Graduate Research Scholarship	2016–2020

Conferences

Canadian Economic Association (Simon Fraser University)	2021
The Econometric Society (Bocconi)	2020
Applied Young Economists Webinar	2020

Languages

French (native), English, Spanish (basic)

Programming: Julia, MATLAB, Stata, Python, MySQL, LaTeX

References

Victor Aguiar
Associate Professor
Department of Economics
University of Western Ontario
519-661-2111 Ext. 85320
vaguiar@uwo.ca

Roy Allen
Assistant Professor
Department of Economics
University of Western Ontario
519-661-2111 Ext. 85227
rallen46@uwo.ca

Nail Kashaev
Assistant Professor
Department of Economics
University of Western Ontario
519-661-2111 Ext. 85320
nkashaev@uwo.ca

David Rivers
Associate Professor
Department of Economics
University of Western Ontario
519-661-2111 Ext. 85227
drivers2@uwo.ca

Abstracts

Price Search and Consumption Inequality: Robust, Credible and Valid Inference

(Job Market Paper)

This paper investigates whether price search mitigates consumption inequality by estimating the elasticity of price with respect to shopping intensity. Price search allows consumers to affect their own prices paid by taking advantage of coupons, deals, and price variations across stores. If low-income consumers use those channels more extensively than high-income consumers, then they can purchase a given bundle of goods at a lower cost. To quantify the effects of search on prices paid by income group, I propose a structural model and develop a revealed preference methodology to set identify the elasticity of price with respect to shopping intensity. The model imposes mild restrictions on preferences, allows for rich heterogeneity, and accounts for measurement error in prices. Furthermore, the model is designed such that changes in the expected average price are only caused by changes in shopping intensity. To ensure the validity of the model and its causal interpretation, I statistically test its assumptions in the data. Using a panel of consumers from the Nielsen Homescan Dataset, I cannot reject that the data were generated by the model at the 95% confidence level. My set estimate implies that doubling shopping intensity decreases the average price paid by at least 19.1% but no more than 19.5%. I also document that shopping intensity and the effect of shopping intensity on prices paid are slightly larger for low-income consumers than high-income consumers. My results suggest that, while price search helps mitigate consumption inequality, low-income consumers mainly achieve a comparable consumption level to high-income consumers by purchasing goods of lower quality.

Robust Inference on Discount Factors

The exponential discounting model is a predominant tool for analyzing dynamic choice in applied work. Its attractiveness rests in that time preferences are summarized by a single parameter—the discount factor. This allows one to tractably analyze a decision maker's intertemporal choices, which is crucial in a vast range of applications. Accordingly, many studies have tried to recover its key time parameter. However, a common feature in this literature is the specification of the consumer's preferences. This constitutes a potentially important limitation as erroneously specifying preferences may lead to spurious estimates of the discount factor. As such, this paper provides set estimates of individual-specific discount factors by using the concavity of the utility function. Furthermore, I derive a novel methodology that allows me to evaluate the sensitivity of discounts factors with respect to measurement error in variables. Given observations on prices and demands from a checkout scanner panel data set, I show that consumers who are more educated, younger, or live in a larger household tend to have slightly higher discount factors.