

XINRONG ZHU

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EDUCATION

University of Wisconsin-Madison

Ph.D. Candidate in Economics 2018–2022 (expected)
– *Committee*: Jean-François Houde (Chair), Jūra Liaukonytė, Alan Sorensen, Kenneth Hendricks

Cornell University

Ph.D Program in Economics 2015–2018
– Transferred to UW-Madison with Dissertation Committee Chair

Renmin University of China

M.S. in Economics 2012–2015

Renmin University of China

B.A. in Economics 2008–2012

RESEARCH INTERESTS

Quantitative Marketing; Empirical Industrial Organization; Retail Analytics

JOB MARKET PAPER

Inference and Impact of Category Captaincy

WORKING PAPERS

Direct and Indirect Effects of Mandatory GMO Disclosure with Existing Voluntary Non-GMO Labeling (under second round review at *Marketing Science*)
with Aaron Adalja, Jūra Liaukonytė, and Emily Wang (equal co-authorship, the author names are listed in alphabetical order)

The Morphology of Assortment Dispersion in US Food Retail Chains
with Robert Clark and Jean-François Houde

WORK IN PROGRESS

Category Captaincy and its Impact on Private Label Segment: Evidence from the Cereal Aisle
with Aaron Adalja and Jūra Liaukonytė

Political Polarization and Brand Preferences: The Consequences of Taking a Political Stance
with Jūra Liaukonytė and Anna Tuchman

Dynamic Predictive Statistical Analysis and Visualization of Consumer Complaints Data
with Nagesh Gavirneni, Miguel Gomez, and Koichi Yonezawa

CONSULTING EXPERIENCE

Danone S.A. 2020–2021
– Predictive text analytics for consumer complaints data (almond milk and yogurt categories)

AWARDS AND HONORS

2020, 2019	Business of Food Small Grant at Cornell University (x 2)
2015–2018	Sage Fellowship at Cornell University
2012–2014	National Scholarship for Graduate Students at Renmin University of China

TEACHING ASSISTANT

Introductory Microeconomics	Professor Alan Sorensen	Spring 2021
Intermediate Microeconomics	Professor Lorenzo Magnolfi	Fall 2019
Introductory Microeconomics	Professor Elizabeth Kelly	Fall 2018
Introductory Microeconomics	Dr. Stephanie Thomas	Fall 2016

RESEARCH EXPERIENCE

Jun 2021 - Dec 2021	Research Assistant to Professor Jūra Liaukonytė
Jan 2020 - Dec 2020	Research Assistant to Professor Jūra Liaukonytė
Jan 2019 - Jun 2019	Project Assistant to Professor Jean-François Houde
Jun 2017 - Sep 2017	Research Assistant to Professor Jūra Liaukonytė
Sep 2016 - May 2018	Research Assistant to Professor Jean-François Houde

INVITED TALKS

2021	Shanghai University of Finance and Economics
	OSU Fisher School of Management, Xiamen University
	Santa Clara University Leavey School of Business
	UCLA Anderson School of Management, Imperial College London
	University of Minnesota Carlson School of Management, City University of Hong Kong
	Chinese University of Hong Kong (Shenzhen), University College London

CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS

2021	International Industrial Organization Conference Rising Star Session
	Marketing Science Conference, Southern Economic Association 91st Annual Meeting

TECHNICAL SKILLS

Computer Languages	Stata, Matlab, R, Wordstat
Document Preparation	L ^A T _E X, Word

REFERENCES

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Jūra Liaukonytė
Dake Family Associate Professor
SC Johnson College of Business
Cornell University
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Inference and Impact of Category Captaincy (job market paper)

This paper studies *category captaincy*, a vertical relationship whereby the retailer delegates pricing and assortment decisions of an entire category to one of the leading manufacturers within the category. These contracts, which are confidential, can lead to disproportionately higher market shares for the captain's products. The objective of this paper is to infer the existence of such contracts and to quantify their impacts on prices, market shares, and profits of manufacturers and retailers. I use the yogurt category as an empirical setting, in which the captain is either Dannon or Yoplait—the top two brands in the category by national market share. Using Nielsen scanner data, I first estimate a random-coefficient model of consumer demand. I use estimates of the brand-retailer specific shocks and a Bayesian inference model to classify retailers into one of the three categories: Dannon-captained retailers, Yoplait-captained retailers, or non-captained retailers. Conditional on the classified arrangements, I then apply conduct tests to infer that captains eliminate double marginalization from their own products, while the non-captain products still have double markups. The results from counterfactual experiments show that category captaincy arrangements increase market shares of the captain by about 50%, but they can also increase retailer profits and consumer welfare by eliminating double markups on the captain's products.

Mandatory and Voluntary Labeling Effects (under second round review at *Marketing Science*) with Aaron Adalja, Jūra Liaukonytė, and Emily Wang (equal co-authorship)

In 2022, all foods for sale in the US will be required to carry disclosure labels if they contain ingredients with genetically modified organisms (GMOs). While this is a significant change to labeling requirements, voluntary non-GMO labels already exist to facilitate consumer choice. Past legislative and voter-initiated measures in several states have proposed mandatory GMO labeling, with Vermont being the only state to successfully pass and implement such a law. We leverage a novel dataset from the Non-GMO Project to examine the direct effect of mandatory GMO labeling and the indirect effect of the associated legislative process on demand for voluntarily-labeled non-GMO products. We show that the legislative process heightened consumer awareness of GMO topics and increased adoption of products with voluntary non-GMO labels, even absent actual implementation of mandatory GMO labeling: about one-third of new non-GMO product adoption is explained by the local information environment. We then utilize implementation of the mandatory GMO labeling law in Vermont as a quasi-experiment to show that in the presence of existing voluntary non-GMO labels, mandatory labeling did not have any additional effect on demand. Our findings suggest that voluntary non-GMO labels may already provide an efficient disclosure mechanism without mandatory GMO labels.