

Connor Cole

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Education

Undergraduate Studies

June 2007 B.A. in Mathematics, *magna cum laude* - Carleton College
April 2013 Master of Public Policy - University of California: Berkeley

Graduate Studies

May 2021 Ph.D. Candidate in Economics - University of Michigan
(Expected) Thesis: *Three Essays in Labor and Public Economics*

Dissertation Committee and References

Martha Bailey (Chair) Department of Economics University of California, Los Angeles (310) 825-1011 baileymj@econ.ucla.edu	James Hines Department of Economics University of Michigan (734) 764-2320 jrhines@umich.edu
Charles Brown Department of Economics University of Michigan (734) 763-3036 charlieb@umich.edu	Brian Jacob Gerald Ford School of Public Policy University of Michigan (734) 615-6994 bajacob@umich.edu

Teaching and Research Fields

Primary Fields: Labor economics, public economics and public finance
Secondary Fields: Demography, economics of education, applied econometrics

Teaching Experience

Spring 2016 Graduate Student Instructor - Intermediate Microeconomic Theory (Undergraduate)
Fall 2015 Graduate Student Instructor - Intermediate Econometrics (Undergraduate)

Research Experience

2016 - 2020 Graduate Student Research Assistant - Martha Bailey, University of Michigan Department of Economics
2014 - 2016 Graduate Student Research Assistant - Professors John Bound and Jeff Smith, University of Michigan Department of Economics, and Professor Kevin Stange, Gerald R. Ford School of Public Policy at the University of Michigan
2014 Graduate Student Research Assistant - James Hines Jr., University of Michigan Department of Economics and University of Michigan Law School

Fellowships and Awards

- 2016 - 2020 Rackham Merit Fellowship - University of Michigan
- 2014 - 2016 Training Fellowship in Economic Demography, Population Studies Center, University of Michigan - National Institute for Child Health and Human Development
- 2014 - 2015 Summer Research Fellowship - University of Michigan
- 2014 Highest distinction on microeconomics preliminary examination - University of Michigan
- 2014 Musgrave Fellowship - University of Michigan

Publications

Bailey, Martha, Connor Cole, Morgan Henderson and Catherine Massey. "How Well Do Record Linkage Algorithms Perform? Lessons from US Historical Data." Forthcoming at the *Journal of Economic Literature*, (2020).

Bailey, Martha, Connor Cole and Catherine Massey. "Simple Strategies for Improving Inference with Linked Data: A Case Study of the 1850-1930 IPUMS Linked Representative Historical Samples." *Historical Methods*, 53(2) (2019): 80-93.

Research Papers

Effect of Family Income in Early Childhood on Child and Adult Outcomes: New Evidence Using Census Data and Tax Discontinuities (**Job Market Paper**)

I estimate a relationship between family income in infancy on later-life outcomes using an underutilized source of variation in the U.S. tax code. Tax benefits for children begin a year earlier for a family if a child is born in December rather than a few days later in January, creating differences in after-tax income in the first year of a child's life worth on average approximately \$2,000 for families in tax year 2016. I use regression discontinuity techniques with an omitted region, with the omitted region used to account for birth timing around the New Year, to calculate the effect of change in after-tax income on outcomes for children and young adults. Using restricted access Census data, I calculate the size of the omitted region using techniques from the bunching estimation literature, and I find that a \$1,000 discontinuity in after-tax income results in an estimated 0.94 percentage point increase in the probability of a student being grade-for-age by high school. This result is largely driven by children from families that are likely to be more disadvantaged at a child's birth, including families with low education attainment and Black families. Moving forward to post-schooling outcomes, I find suggestive evidence that small effects on labor force attachment, earnings and education attainment persist for years after the adults turn 18, but they attenuate with age.

Research in Progress

Short and Long-term Effects of Exposure to Program Eligibility Cutoffs on Behavior: Evidence from the Medicaid Program

Eligibility standards for various programs and benefits often create so-called "notches" where eligibility for the benefit is discontinuous in some measure of family economic resources. Economic theory predicts that exposure to such notches could lead some individuals to change economic behavior to ensure eligibility for the benefit. I test for short-term responses to a notch and the long-term consequences of exposure using a unique feature of the Medicaid program that expanded eligibility to children under much more generous income requirements depending on the birthdate of the children, but then later expanded eligibility to all children under the same rules regardless of birthdate by the year 2000. Using Survey of Income and Program Participation (SIPP) data and restricted access Census data, I use a regression discontinuity design in child birthdate. I find weak evidence of short-term responses of family economic decision-making to the more restrictive notch in the SIPP. However, I reject evidence of long-term responses in the Census in the year 2000 with a precisely estimated 0. These results strongly suggest that behavior around this particular more restrictive Medicaid eligibility notch had no detectable long-term consequences for family economic decision making. This finding ties in with an established literature showing relatively elastic labor force responses of the families affected by these transfer programs.

Professional Activities and Service

Referee

Explorations in Economic History

Selected Conference Presentations and Invited Seminars

- 2020 Invited presentation at the University of California, Los Angeles
- 2018 Health, History, Demography and Development Seminar Day - "Short and Long-term Effects of Exposure to Program Eligibility Cutoffs on Behavior: Evidence from the Medicaid Program"
- 2015 Midwest Economics Association - "Class Size and Student Achievement: New Evidence from California 2007-2013"

Economics Department and University Service

- 2017 Graduate Economics Society - Co-President
- 2016 Graduate Employees' Organization - Economics Department Representative
- 2015 Economics Program Committee - Student Representative

Skills and Additional Qualifications

Computer Languages: STATA, SAS, R

Restricted Data Licenses: Special sworn status with the U.S. Census Bureau, National Center for Education Statistics restricted datasets

Personal Information

U.S Citizen

This version: Current as of October 2020