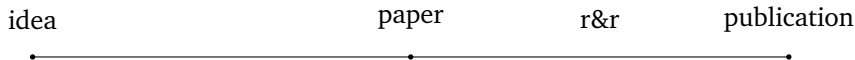


From Ideas to Publications

Hanzhe Zhang

Wednesday, January 29, 2025

Steps from an idea to publication



- An idea
question(s) from observation, model, or literature
- Paper
Abstract
Introduction
Model
Equilibrium
Observation (Data)
- Publication
submission and r&r strategies

Publication outlets – general interest journals

Top-tier general interest (“top five”)

- ▶ Econometrica (Ecma) [pure theory]
- ▶ Review of Economic Studies (REStud) [pure theory]
- ▶ American Economic Review (AER) [applied theory]
- ▶ Journal of Political Economy (JPE) [applied theory]
- ▶ Quarterly Journal of Economics (QJE) [no theory, fast desk reject (1d)]

Second-tier general interest

- ▶ Journal of the European Economic Association (JEEA) [applied theory]
- ▶ Economic Journal (EJ) [applied theory]
- ▶ International Economic Review (IER) [applied theory]
- ▶ European Economic Review (EER) [applied theory]
- ▶ Review of Economics and Statistics (REStat) [no theory]

Publication outlets – (theory) field journals

Top-tier field journals (“top field”)

- ▶ Theoretical Economics (TE) [pure theory]
- ▶ Journal of Economic Theory (JET) [pure theory]
- ▶ American Economic Journal: Microeconomics (AEJMicro) [applied theory]
- ▶ Games and Economic Behavior (GEB) [pure/applied/experimental]
- ▶ RAND Journal of Economics (RAND) [applied theory: IO]
- ▶ Management Science (MS) [applied theory: IO]

Lower-tier field journals

- ▶ Economic Theory (ET) [pure theory]
- ▶ International Journal of Game Theory (IJGT) [pure theory]
- ▶ Social Choice and Welfare (SCW) [pure theory]
- ▶ Journal of Industrial Economics (JIE) [applied theory: IO]
- ▶ International Journal of Industrial Organization (IJIO) [applied theory: IO]
- ▶ Journal of Economics & Management Strategy (JEMS) [applied theory: IO]
- ▶ Journal of Economic Behavior and Organization (JEBO) [applied/experimental]

Publication outlets – short pieces and others

Short pieces (5000-7000 words)

- ▶ American Economic Review: Insights (AER:Insights)
- ▶ Economics Letters (EL)
- ▶ Economic Theory Bulletin (ETB)
- ▶ Economics Bulletin (EB)

Other general interest journals

- ▶ Economic Inquiry (EI)
- ▶ Southern Economic Journal (SEJ)
- ▶ Journal of Political Economy: Microeconomics (JPEMicro)

Other fields' top journals that publish theory pieces

- ▶ Journal of Labor/Public/Development/Urban/Monetary Economics
- ▶ Journal of Finance, Journal of Financial Economics, Review of Financial Studies
- ▶ American Political Science Review, American J of Political Science, J of Politics

Lists of journals

Lists of journals for tenure in economics departments

- ▶ NYU Stern List of leading journals for economics faculty, 2020
- ▶ Tilburg, 2020
- ▶ SUFE Tenure-track list, 2018

Lists of journals for tenure in business school

- ▶ UT Dallas 24 (UTD24), since 1990
- ▶ Financial Times 50 Journals (FT50): top 5 +/- RAND

Rankings

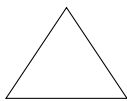
- ▶ “New Rankings of Economics Journals: Documenting and Explaining the Rise of the New Society Journals,” 2021
- ▶ “A journal ranking for the ambitious economist,” 2009
- ▶ RePEc: most up-to-date (journal rankings are sticky)
- ▶ Scimag JCR: eigenvalue-based, compared across disciplines

Finding a research idea

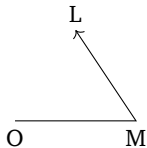
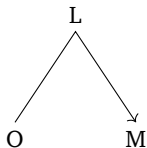
1. Observation (interesting to you; “important”)
 - ▶ applied theory papers often start with motivating stylized facts
 - ▶ Why do we observe this phenomenon?
 - ▶ What are the determinants of this phenomenon?
2. Model
 - ▶ pure theory papers often start with models
 - ▶ What happens if I relax this assumption?
 - ▶ This model is fun to work out.
3. Literature
 - ▶ Often done by more experienced researchers
 - ▶ Let's fill this gap in the literature
 - ▶ Let's compare and contrast these two papers
 - ▶ Let's merge the models of these two papers

Proceeding with a research idea

Literature
(fill gap;
different from rest;
unified several;
advanced significantly)

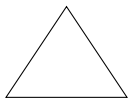


Observation Model
(interesting; (solid;
important) elegant)

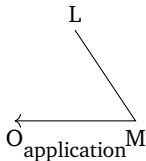
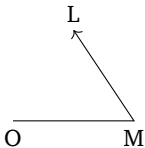
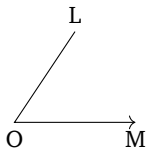
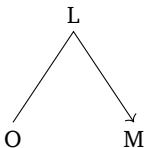


Proceeding with a research idea

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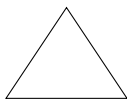


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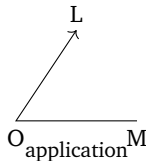
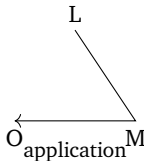
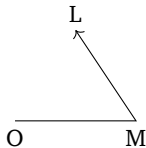
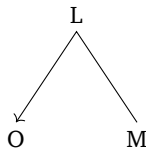
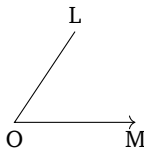
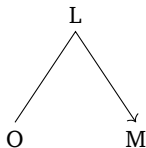


Proceeding with a research idea

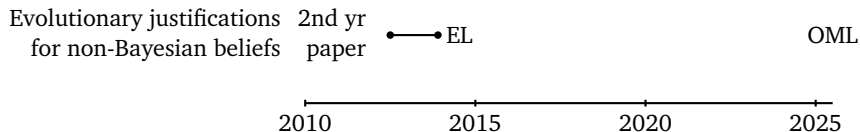
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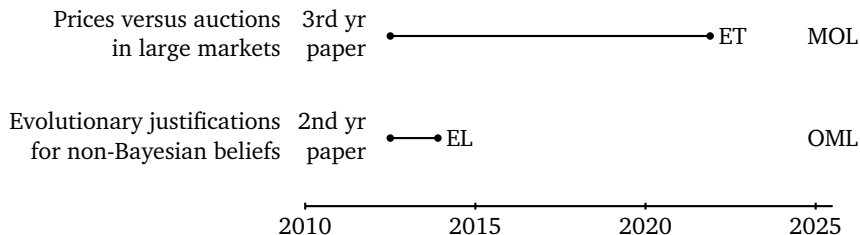
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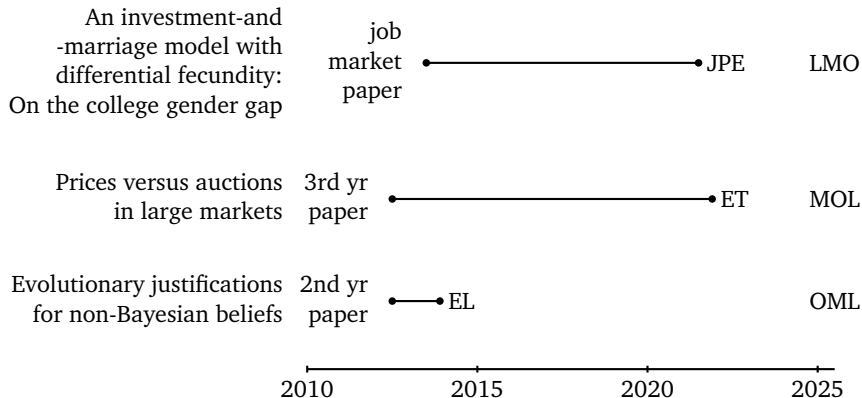
Research ideas: My PhD years, 2010–2015



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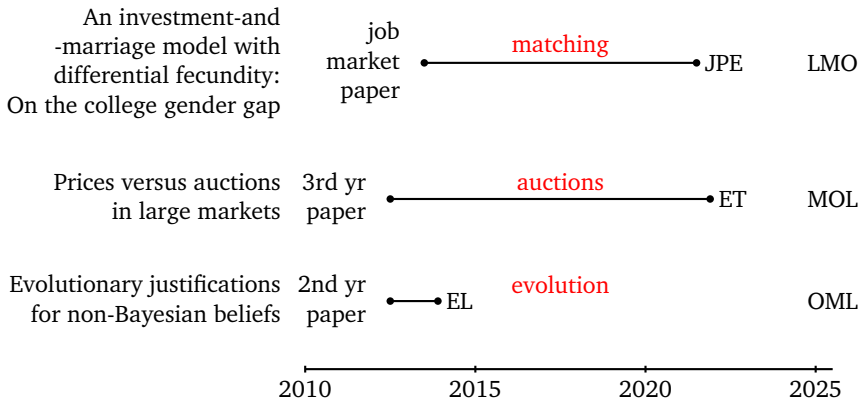


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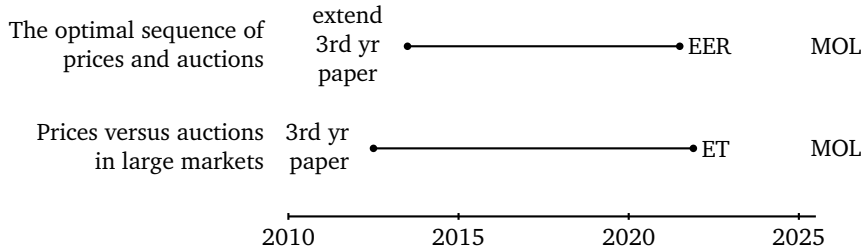


Research ideas: My PhD years, 2010–2015

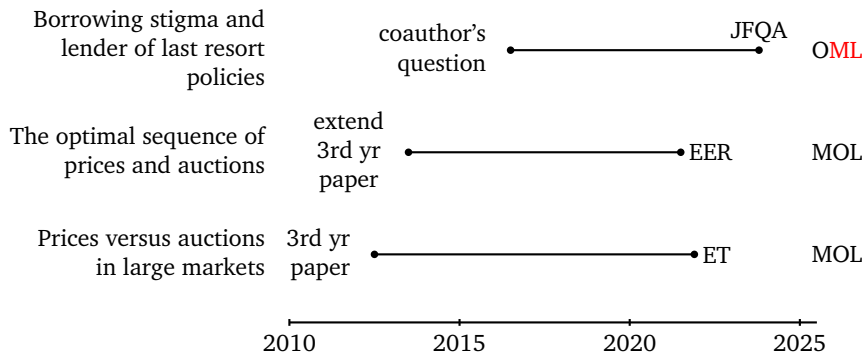
Essays on matching, auctions, and evolution



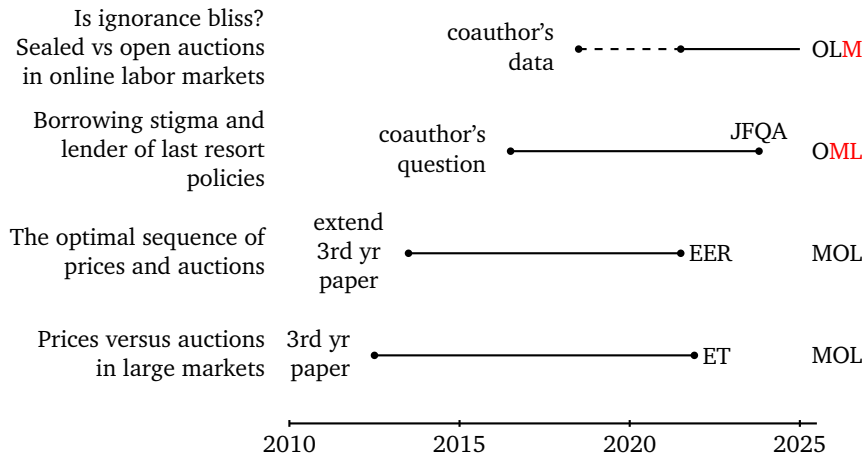
Research Area: Auctions



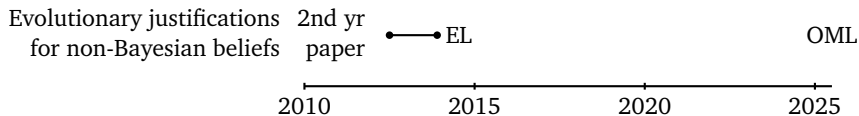
Research Area: Auctions



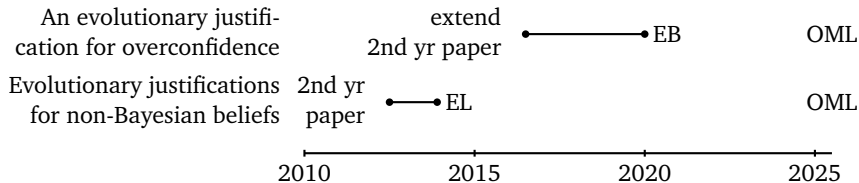
Research Area: Auctions



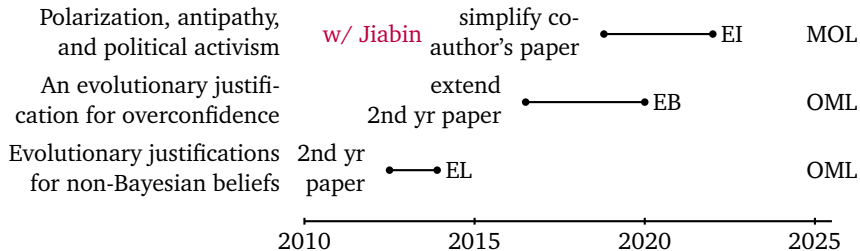
Research Area/Agenda: Evolution



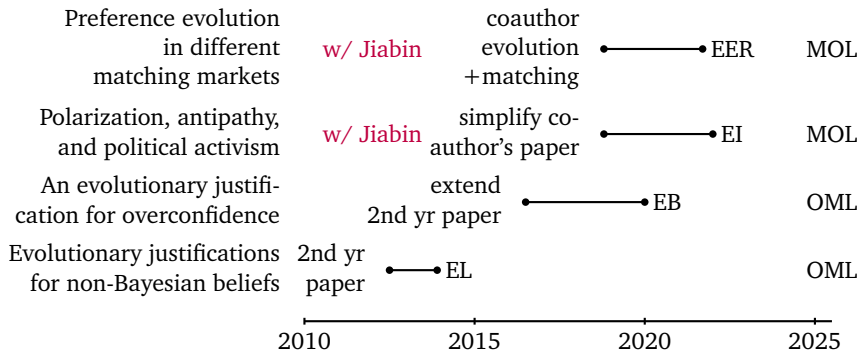
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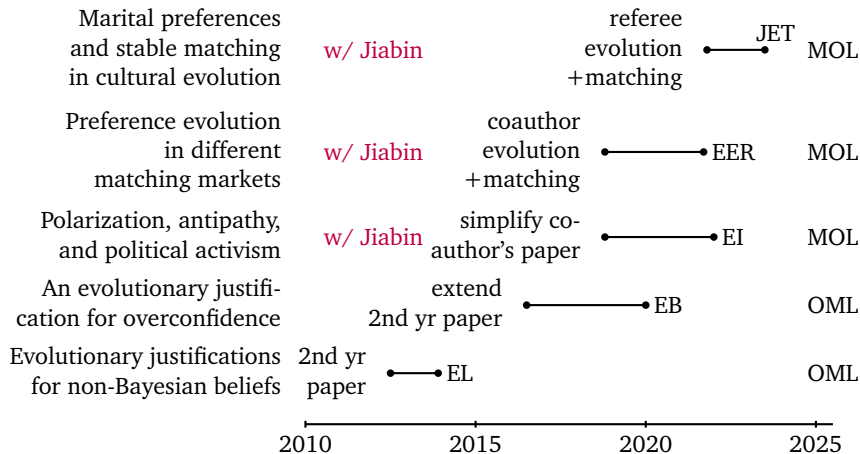
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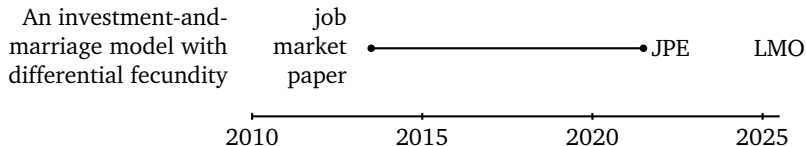
Research Area/Agenda: Evolution



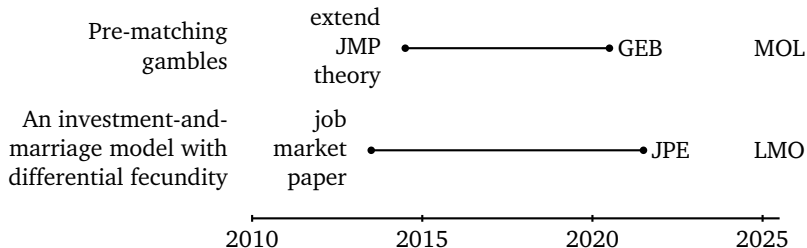
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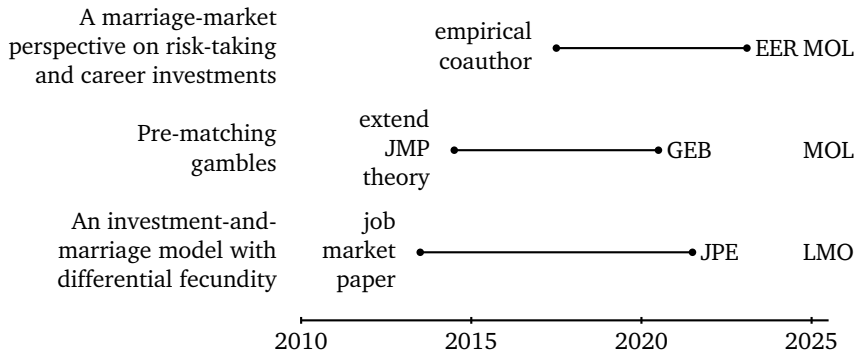
Research Agenda: Matching



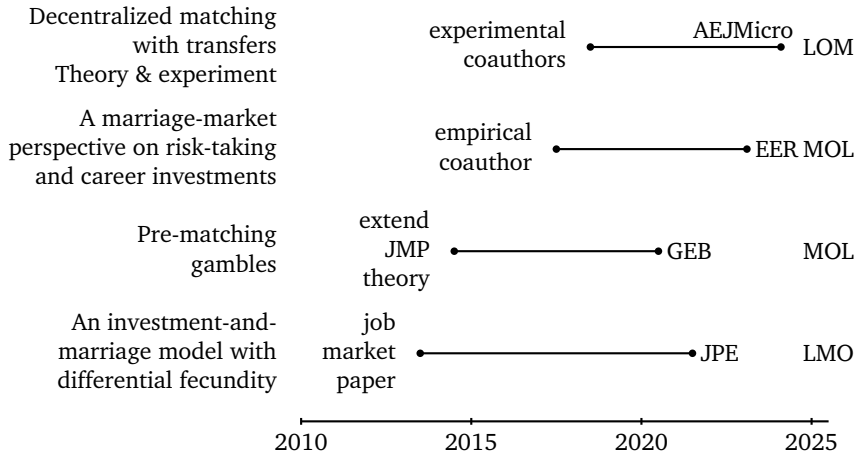
Research Agenda: Matching



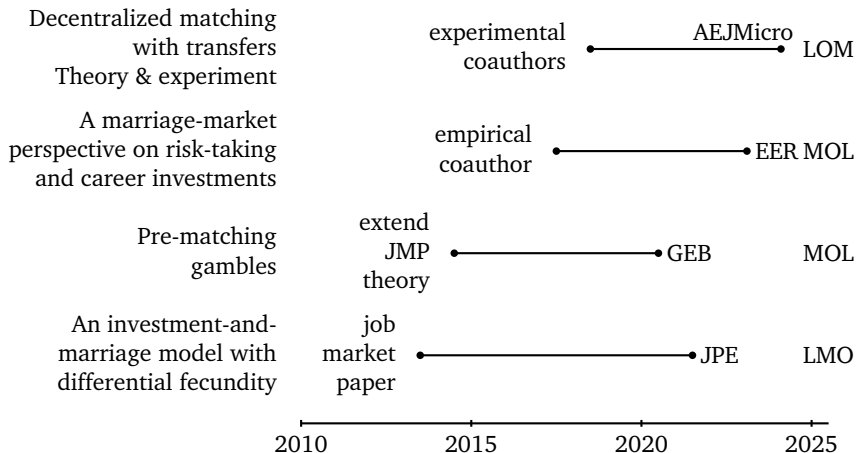
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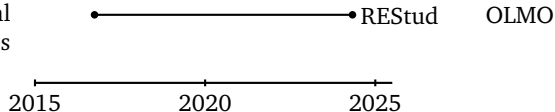


Research Agenda: Matching

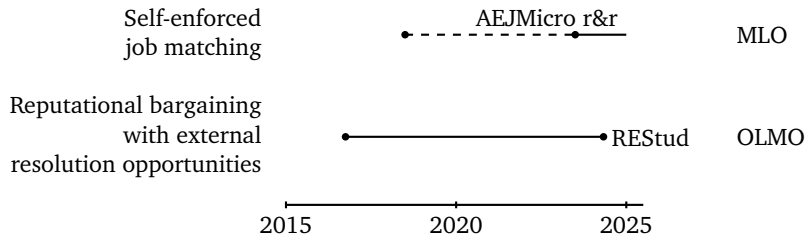


Research Agenda: Matching and Bargaining

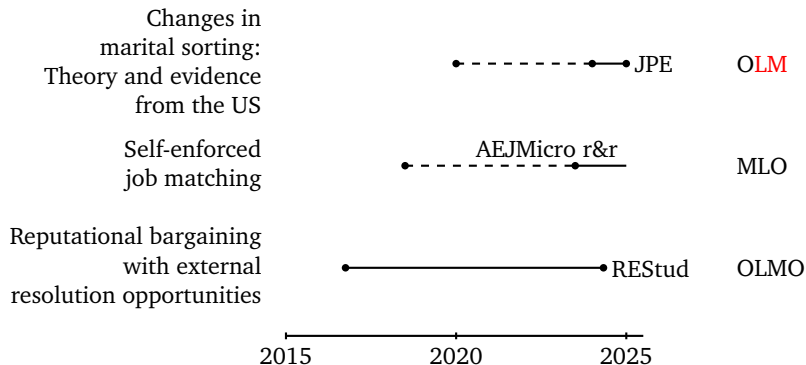
Reputational bargaining
with external
resolution opportunities



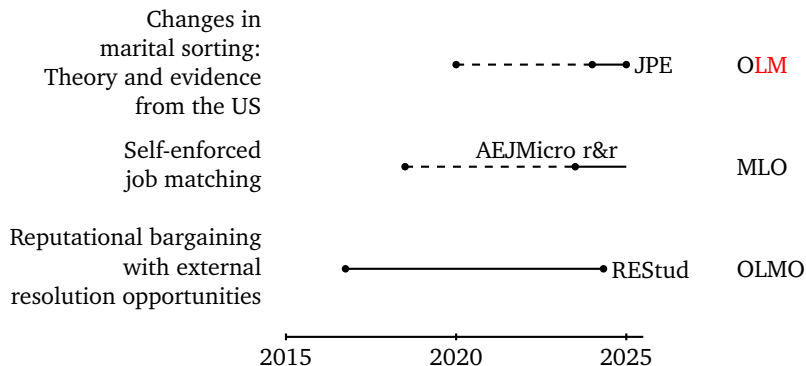
Research Agenda: Matching and Bargaining



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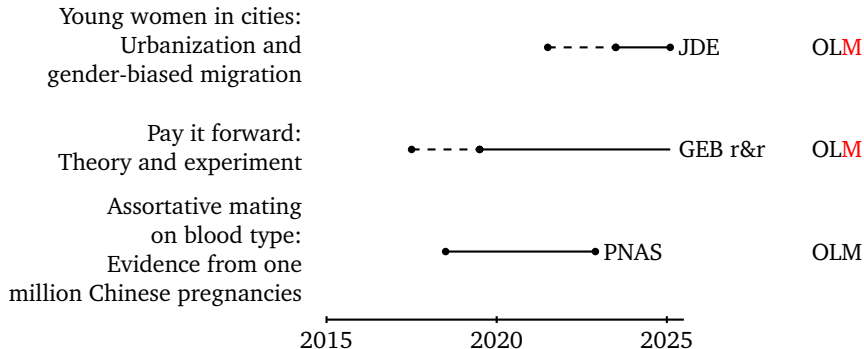


Research Agenda: Matching and Bargaining



Model for Data

Present yourself as a data-friendly theorist and opportunities arise on their own.

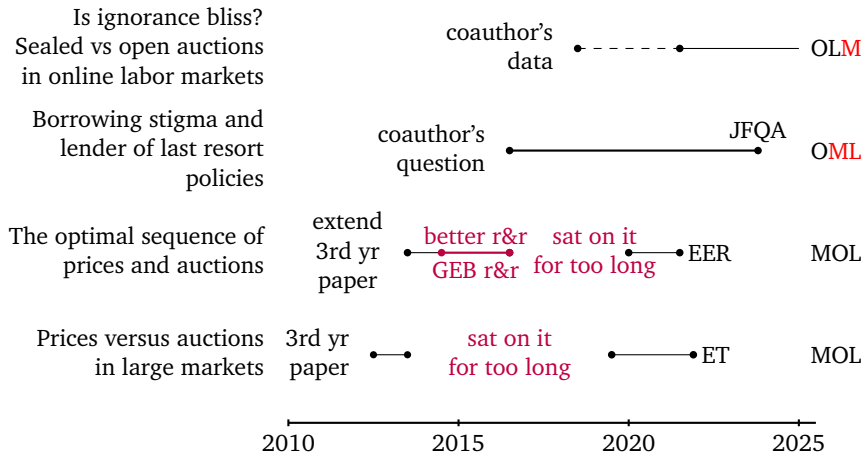


Paper

- ▶ Abstract
 - Write your most ideal abstract in the beginning (this defines the ceiling of the paper).
- ▶ Introduction
 - Contribution: 2-3 main contributions
 - Literature: related literature and especially how your paper differs from/connects other papers
- ▶ Model
- ▶ Equilibrium
- ▶ Observation (data/stylized facts/implications/applications)

Lessons: Auctions

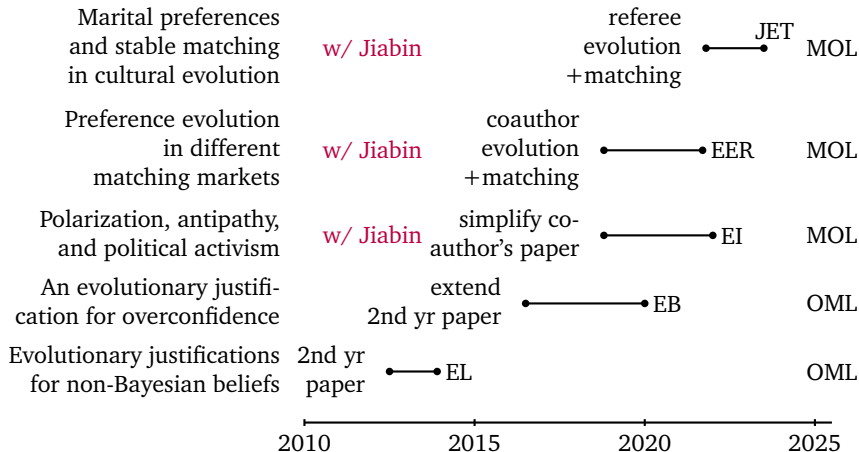
Don't sit on a paper. It will not improve.
Address every comment of referee.



Lessons: Evolution

Work with good (efficient, flexible) coauthors.

(Probably) don't coauthor with undergrads (not because they are bad).

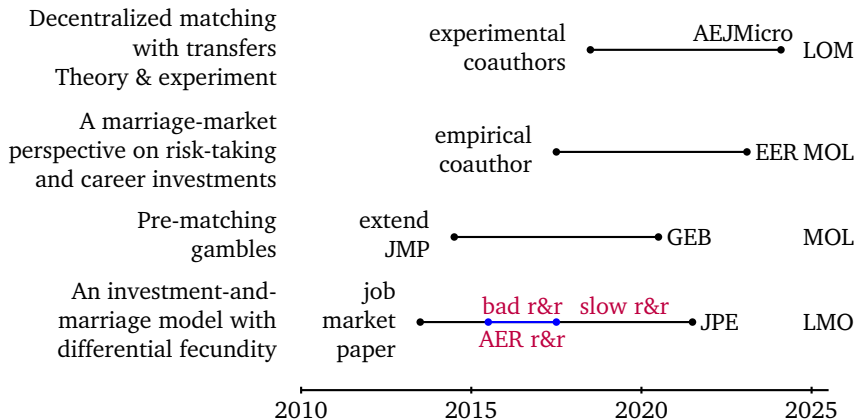


Lessons: Matching

Address every comment of referees fast.

Care less about your papers (especially job market paper).

Some referees are just bad draws.



Criteria for different levels

- ▶ Top five: interesting and important question; elegant and innovative model; advances the literature
- ▶ Top field: interesting question + solid model + fills a gap in the literature; boring question + solid model + advances the literature
- ▶ Lower-tier field: specific question + solid model + different from the literature

THANK YOU!