

EDUCATION

Clemson University

Ph.D. in Economics

Clemson, SC

Expected 2024

– Fields: Public Economics, Economic History

Clemson University

M.A. in Economics

Clemson, SC

2019–2022

Ocean University of China

M.S. in Economics

Qingdao, Shandong

2016–2019

Jiangxi University of Finance and Economics

B.A. in Economics (Minor in Finance), with honors

Nanchang, Jiangxi

2012–2016

WORKING PAPERS

The Erie Canal and the Economic Transformation of Nineteenth-Century New York State (Job Market Paper)

Abstract: This paper presents the first causal estimates of the impact of canals on sectoral transition and long-term growth. My context is the Erie Canal in nineteenth-century New York State. Using a difference-in-differences approach, I compare the outcomes in towns located close to the canal relative to those that were not close to the canal, before and after its opening. In an alternative identification strategy, I construct a least-cost path connecting targeted towns as an instrument for the actual canal route. I find that towns located close the canal experienced faster population growth, lower employment shares in agriculture, higher employment shares in commerce, and faster employment growth in manufacturing. I argue that the mechanism underlying sectoral transition and long-term growth was the development of small-scale manufacturing that processed agricultural products and the expansion of commercial activities brought about by lower transportation costs and easier access to distant markets. My findings also indicate the extent of the canal's impact: the effects disappear in areas that were located more than 15 to 20 km from the canal.

The Political Distribution of Erie Canal Construction

Abstract: The early nineteenth-century New York State experienced a western expansion. The Erie Canal was supposed to traverse high-population-density areas to meet merchant shipping demands, lower transportation costs, and generate toll revenue. However, I show that western section of the canal was actually constructed in areas characterized by relatively low population density. To explain this deviation from the optimal path, I develop a model utilizing the median voter theorem, featuring two competing political parties. These parties navigated trade-offs between rent-seeking, electoral victory, and toll revenue from the canal. In an empirical analysis, I construct economic paths and least-cost paths to approximate the optimal route, considering both population density and construction costs. I then establish the correlation between electoral victory and the deviation from economic paths.

The Productivity of the Canal System in New York State: 1844-1860

Abstract: This paper calculates the total factor productivity (TFP) of the canal system in New York State from 1844 to 1860. The data indicates a gradual increase in TFP, punctuated by a remarkable surge between 1849 and 1852. This surge is attributed to two factors: the enlargement of the canal system that facilitated the passage of larger boats, and extended navigable days resulting from warmer weather conditions. The panic of 1857 resulted in a decline in the total tonnage movement across the canals. Interestingly, this downturn in tonnage did not translate into decreased TFP. The TFP actually increased due to the extended navigable days and quick recovery of canal traffic post-panic.

PUBLICATIONS

Xing, Y., X. Jiang and X. Li (2018). Heterogeneous Impacts of Investments in Environmental Governance on Economic Growth: A Perspective from Urbanization. *Journal of Natural Resources* 33(4): 576-587.

WORKS IN PROGRESS

Transaction Costs, the Abandonment of the Grand Canal and the Development of Paper Money, 1650-1911

TEACHING

- | | |
|--|--------------------|
| • Instructor of Record
Principles of Microeconomics (ECON 2110): Fall 2021; Fall 2022 ; Spring 2023; Fall 2023 | Clemson University |
| • Teaching Assistant
Public Choice (ECON 3600): Spring 2022
Intermediate Microeconomics (ECON 3140): Spring 2022
Principles of Macroeconomics (ECON 2120): Spring 2021
Principles of Microeconomics (ECON 2110): Spring 2020; Fall 2020 | Clemson University |
| • Teaching Workshop
Tollison Teaching Workshop with Gail Hoyt (online), 2021 | Clemson University |

FELLOWSHIPS

- John E. Walker Department of Economics Assistantship, Clemson University, 2019–2024.
- National Scholarship for Graduate Students, Ministry of Education of the People's Republic of China, 2018.
- Bank of Jiujiang Scholarship , Jiangxi University of Finance and Economics, 2015.
- “Research China” – Chinese Social Survey Scholarship for College Students, 2014.
- The First Place or Second Place of University Scholarships in every academic year, 2012-2019.

PRESENTATIONS

- The Ninth World Congress of Cliometrics, Trinity College, Dublin, 2023
- Workshops in Public Economics, John E. Walker Department of Economics, 2020–2023.
- Historical Perspectives on Economics Issues: Big Data and Applications, University of Southern Denmark, 2022.
- The Fourth National Graduate Annual Conference, Wuhan, 2017
- Doctoral Forum of Fudan University, Shanghai, 2016

SERVICES

Student Ambassador, Economic History Society

SKILLS

- **Causal Inference:** Difference-in-Differences, Regression Discontinuity, Instrumental Variables, Event Studies, Synthetic Control
- **Programming Languages:** Python (numpy, pandas, scikit-learn, BeautifulSoup)
- **Analytical Tools:** Stata, ArcGIS (distance analysis, geoprocessing, digitizing, map design, StoryMaps)
- **Other Skills:** \LaTeX

LANGUAGES

- **Chinese:** native
- **English:** fluent

REFERENCES

Howard N. Bodenhorn (Chair)

Professor, Department of Economics
Clemson University
Clemson, SC 29634
Research Associate, NBER
Email: bodnhnr@clemson.edu
Phone: (864)656-4335

Robert K. Fleck

Professor, Department of Economics
Clemson University
Clemson, SC 29634
Email: rfleck@clemson.edu
Phone: (864)656-3965

Jonathan M. Leganza

Assistant Professor, Department of Economics
Clemson University
Clemson, SC 29634
Email: JLEGANZ@clemson.edu
Phone: (864)656-3481

Michael D. Makowsky

Associate Professor, Department of Economics
Clemson University
Clemson, SC 29634
Email: mdmakow@clemson.edu
Phone: (864)656-3481