

Yu Kyung Koh

November 2022

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EDUCATION

Ph.D. in Economics	Columbia University	2017-Present
M.A. in Economics	Columbia University	2019
B.A. in Economics	The University of Chicago	2015

FIELDS OF SPECIALIZATION

Fields: Family Economics, Labor Economics, Applied Microeconomics

REFERENCES

Pierre-André Chiappori (<i>Co-sponsor</i>)	Bernard Salanié (<i>Co-sponsor</i>)	Brendan O’Flaherty
E. Rowan and Barbara Steinschneider Professor of Economics	Professor of Economics	Professor of Economics
Columbia University	Columbia University	Columbia University
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JOB MARKET PAPER

“The Unequal Gains from Racial Desegregation in the US Marriage Market”

Abstract: Interracial marriages have increased in the US over the past several decades, but the trends differ across race, gender, and education groups. This suggests racial desegregation in the marriage market may not have improved marriage prospects of all groups. This paper studies why some groups have gained more from marital desegregation than others over the past four decades. To this end, I build a transferable utility matching model to define and estimate the welfare gains from marital desegregation by comparing the equilibrium rates of singlehood in the observed marriage market with those in a completely segregated marriage market. I find that among Blacks and Whites, college-educated men gained more than their female and lower-educated male counterparts. To understand why, I implement a decomposition method based on quantitative comparative statics to examine the separate roles of the changes in population distribution and the changes in marital surplus. I find that the rise in the welfare gains for college-educated Black men is largely driven by the increase in the joint surplus from marriage with college-educated White women. Other Black men and women did not benefit as much from any change in the marital surplus, suggesting that race relations have not improved in the marriage market except for the most educated Black men. I also find that the rise in welfare gains for college-educated White men is mechanically driven by the increase in the number of college-educated Asian and Hispanic women. Simulation results suggest that progress toward racial integration in the marriage market would significantly reduce the rates of singlehood among Blacks.

WORKING PAPERS

“Spousal Bargaining Power and Consumption of Married Couples in the US: Evidence from the Scanner Data”
(with So Yoon Ahn)

Abstract: This paper studies how spousal bargaining power affects consumption patterns of married households in the US, using a detailed barcode-level dataset. We use two distribution factors as proxies for spousal bargaining power: (1) spouses’ relative education and (2) spouses’ relative potential wage, which is our preferred distribution factor. As an arguably exogenous measure of bargaining power, our relative potential wage is constructed as a Bartik-style measure of female-to-male wage ratio, exploiting county-level variations in heterogeneous exposure to different industries and state-wide wage growth. We find that the expenditure share on women’s beauty goods increases and the expenditure share on alcohol decreases when the relative bargaining position of the wife is higher. These results are consistent with household bargaining explanations. For couples with children, improved women’s household bargaining position is associated with a higher budget share on books, stationery, and school supplies, which are potentially related to investment in children. For singles, we do not find statistically meaningful effects of relative potential wage on any of their consumption outcomes, which strengthens the interpretation that the relative wage only affects couples’ consumption decisions.

SELECTED WORK IN PROGRESS

“Geographical Variation in the Gains from Racial Desegregation in the US Marriage Market”

PRE-DOCTORAL PUBLICATION

“Evaluation of the Reggio Approach to Early Education” with P. Biroli, D. Del Boca, J. J. Heckman, L. P. Heckman, S. Kuperman, S. Moktan, C. D. Pronzato, A. L. Ziff, *Research in Economics*, 72(1): 1-32 (2018).

INVITED CONFERENCE PRESENTATION

2022: Annual Meeting of the Society of Economics of the Household (UCL), Leuven Summer Event – Labor/Family Economics (KU Leuven)
2021: Asian and Australasian Society of Labour Economics Annual Conference (Peking University, Virtual)

RELEVANT WORK EXPERIENCE

Full-Time Research Professional at the Center for the Economics of Human Development, University of Chicago, 2015-2017 (Director: James J. Heckman)

TEACHING EXPERIENCE

TA for Intermediate Microeconomics (Dr. Wouter Vergote), Columbia University, Fall 2019
TA for Intermediate Microeconomics (Prof. Caterina Musatti), Columbia University, Spring 2020

HONORS AND AWARDS

Dissertation Fellowship, Columbia University, 2022-2023
Kwanjeong Education Foundation Fellowship, 2017-2022
Dean's Fellowship, Columbia University, 2017-2022
Young-Iob Chung Fellowship, Columbia University, 2019-2020
First Place in the Econometrics Game, Becker Friedman Institute, University of Chicago, 2015

UNIVERSITY/DEPARTMENT SERVICE

Student organizer for Applied Microeconomic Theory Colloquium, Columbia University, 2021-2022

SKILLS

Computer Skills: R, Matlab, Stata, Julia, Python

Languages: Korean (native), English (fluent)

PERSONAL

Citizenship: South Korea