

# Using Field Experiments in Economics

John A. List

## **Course Outline & Readings**

### **1. Field Experimental Methodology**

- Harrison, Glenn W. and John A. List, "Field Experiments," *Journal of Economic Literature*, (2004), 42(4), pp. 1009-1055.
- List, John A. "Why Economists Should Conduct Field Experiments and 14 Tips for Pulling One Off," *Journal of Economic Perspectives*, (2011), 25(3): pp. 3-15.
- Levitt, Steven D. and John A. List, "Field Experiments in Economics: The Past, The Present, and The Future," *European Economic Review*, (2009), 53(1), pp. 1-18.
- Al-Ubaydli, Omar, and John A. List, On the generalizability of experimental results in economics, In Frechette, G. & Schotter, A., *Methods of Modern Experimental Economics*, Oxford University Press, 2013.
- List, John A., Sally Sadoff, and Mathis Wagner, "So you want to run an experiment, now what? Some Simple Rules of Thumb for Optimal Experimental Design," *Experimental Economics*, (2011), 14(4), pp. 439-457.
- List, John A., "Homo experimentalis Evolves," *Science*, (2008), 321(5886), pp. 207-208.
- List, John A. "Field Experiments: A Bridge between Lab and Naturally Occurring Data," *The B.E. Journal of Economic Analysis & Policy*, (2006), 6(2 - Advances), Article 8.
- Al-Ubaydli, Omar, and John A. List, "Do Natural Field Experiments Afford Researchers More or Less," *Control than Laboratory Experiments?* *American Economic Review*, (2015, P&P), 105(5):462-66.
- Maniadis, Zacharias, Fabio Tufano, and John A. List, "One Swallow Does not Make a Summer: New Evidence on Anchoring Effects," *American Economic Review*, (2014) Volume: 104 Issue: 1 Pages: 277-290.
- List, John A., Azeem M. Shaikh, and Yang Xu. Multiple hypothesis testing in experimental economics. No. w21875. National Bureau of Economic Research, 2016.
- Al-Ubaydli O., List, J.A., Danielle LoRe, and Dana Suskind. "Scaling for Economists: Lessons from the Medical Literature," *Journal of Economic Perspectives*, forthcoming.
- Al-Ubaydli, Omar, John A. List, and Dana Suskind. "What Can We Learn From Experiments? Understanding the Threats to the Scalability of Experimental Results," *American Economic Review*, (P&P), forthcoming.

## **2. Field Experimental Applications**

### **a. Education**

- Enhancing the Efficacy of Teacher Incentives through Loss Aversion: A Field Experiment  
with Roland G. Fryer, Jr, Steven D. Levitt, Sally Sadoff: NBER w18237
- Levitt, Steven, John A. List, Susanne Neckermann, and Sally Sadoff, "The Behavioralist Goes to School: Leveraging Behavioral Economics to Improve Educational Performance", *American Economic Journal: Economic Policy*, (2016), 8(4), 183-219.
- List, John A., Anya Samek, and Dana Suskind. "Combining Behavioral Economics and Field Experiments to Reimagine Early Childhood Education," *Behavioral Public Policy*, forthcoming.
- The Effect of Early Education on Social Preferences  
with Alexander W. Cappelen, Anya Samek, Bertil Tungodden: NBER wp22898
- Fryer, Roland G., Steven D. Levitt, and John A. List, "Exploring the Impact of Financial Incentives on Stereotype Threat: Evidence from a Pilot Study," *American Economic Review*, (2008), 98(2—P&P), pp. 370-375.

### **b. Charity**

- Della Vigna, Stefano, John A. List, and Ulrike Malmendier, "Testing for Altruism and Social Pressure in Charitable Giving," *Quarterly Journal of Economics*, (2012), 127(1), pp. 1- 56. 150.
- List, John A. and David Lucking-Reiley "The Effects of Seed Money and Refunds on Charitable Giving: Experimental Evidence from a University Capital Campaign." *Journal of Political Economy*, February 2002, 110(8), pp. 215-233.
- Karlan, Dean and John A. List, "Does Price Matter in Charitable Giving? Evidence from a Large-Scale Natural Field Experiment," *American Economic Review*, (2007), 97(5), pp. 1774- 1793.
- Landry, Craig, Andreas Lange, John A. List, Michael K. Price, and Nicholas G. Rupp. "Toward an Understanding of the Economics of Charity: Evidence from a Field Experiment," *Quarterly Journal of Economics*, (2006), 121(2), pp. 747-782.
- Landry, Craig, Andreas Lange, John A. List, Michael K. Price, and Nicholas G. Rupp, "Is a Donor in Hand Better than Two in the Bush? Evidence from a Natural Field Experiment.," *American Economic Review*, (2010), 100 (3), pp. 958-983.
- Karlan, Dean, John A. List, and Eldar Shafir, "Small Matches and Charitable Giving: Evidence from a Natural Field Experiment," *Journal of Public Economics*, (2011), 95 (5-6): pp. 344-350.
- Edwards, James T. and John A. List "Toward an Understanding of why Suggestions Work in Charitable Fundraising: Theory and Evidence from a Natural Field Experiment," *Journal of Public Economics*, (2014), Volume: 114, pp. 1-13.

- List, John A. and Michael K. Price, "Charitable Giving Around the World: Thoughts on How to Expand the Pie," CESifo Economic Studies, (2012), 58(1), pp. 1-30.

List, John A.; and Samak, Anya C, "Exploring the origins of charitable acts: Evidence from an artefactual field experiment with young children," Economics Letters, (2013), 118(3), pp. 431-434.

### **c. Field Experiments in Firms**

- Hossain, Tanjim and John A. List, "The Behavioralist Visits the Factory: Increasing Productivity Using Simple Framing Manipulations," Management Science, (2012).

- Levitt, Steven D. and John A. List, "Was there really a Hawthorne Effect at the Hawthorne Plant? An Analysis of the Original Illumination Experiments," American Economic Journal: Applied Economics (2011), 3(1): pp. 224-238.

- A New Approach to an Age-Old Problem: Solving Externalities by Incenting Workers Directly with Greer K. Gosnell, Robert Metcalfe: w22316

- Toward an Understanding of the Economics of Apologies: Theory and Evidence from a Large Scale Natural Field Experiment"

- The Gender Gap in the Gig Economy: Evidence from Over One Million Uber Drivers

### **d. Gender**

- Flory, Jeffrey A., Andreas Leibbrandt and John A. List, "Do Competitive Work Places Deter Female Workers? A Large-Scale Natural Field Experiment on Gender Differences in Job- Entry Decisions," Review of Economic Studies, (2015), 82(1), 122-155.

- Gneezy, Uri, Kenneth Leonard, and John A. List, "Gender Differences in Competition: Evidence from a Matrilineal and a Patriarchal Society," Econometrica, (2009), 77(5), pp. 1637-1664.

- Andersen, Steffen, Seda Ertac, Uri Gneezy, John A. List, and Sandra Maximiano, "Gender, Competitiveness and Socialization at a Young Age: Evidence from a Matrilineal and a Patriarchal Society," Review of Economics and Statistics, (2013), Volume: 95 Issue: 4 Pages: 1438-1443.

- Della Vigna, Stefano, John A. List, Ulrike Malmendier, and Gautum Rao, "The Importance of Being Marginal: Gender Differences in Generosity," American Economic Review, (2013, P&P), 103(3): pp. 586-90.

### **e. Discrimination**

- List, John A., "The Nature and Extent of Discrimination in the Marketplace: Evidence from the Field," Quarterly Journal of Economics, (2004), 119(1), pp. 49-89.

- Toward an Understanding of Why People Discriminate: Evidence from a Series of Natural Field Experiments with Uri Gneezy, Michael K. Price: NBER w17855

#### **f. Adding Structure to Field Experiments**

- Della Vigna, Stefano, John A. List, and Ulrike Malmendier, "Testing for Altruism and Social Pressure in Charitable Giving," *Quarterly Journal of Economics*, (2012), 127(1), pp. 1-56.
- Herberich, David, John A. List, and Michael Price, "How Many Economists does it take to Change a Lightbulb," working paper.
- Della Vigna, Stefano, John A. List, Ulrike Malmendier, and Gautam Rao, "Voting to Tell Others," *Review of Economic Studies*, (2017) 84 (1): 143-181.
- Della Vigna, Stefano, John A. List, Ulrike Malmendier, and Gautam Rao. Estimating social preferences and gift exchange at work. No. w22043. National Bureau of Economic Research, 2016.