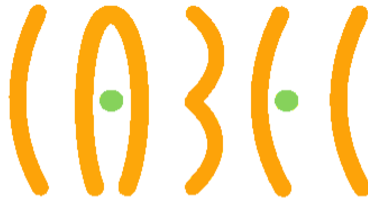


USC Dornsife



Los Angeles Behavioral Economics Laboratory
In honor of Jean-Jacques Laffont



The Los Angeles Behavioral Economics Laboratory (**LABEL**) is a research center dedicated to experimental research on economic decision-making and strategic interactions, led by Dr. Isabelle Brocas and Dr. Juan Carrillo. At **LABEL**, we focus on the collection of "non-choice" data such as reaction times, skin conductance, neural activity, and eye movements to better understand the mechanisms underlying decision-making. We are also particularly interested in the study of age-related changes in decision-making. For more information on **LABEL**, please visit our [website](#).

How long is a minute?

Intuitively, our subjective experience of the passage of time should impact our willingness to wait for future rewards. This means that our ability to discount should be linked to our perception of time. A recent LABEL study has examined this precise relationship in a



controlled laboratory experiment. Participants were asked to produce time intervals in a first task and to make simple inter-temporal choices in a second task. We found a striking relationship between the two tasks. Participants who overestimated time (and for whom time passed slowly) also chose earlier rewards. These findings confirm the hypothesis that inter-temporal decision-making is governed by our own hardwired subjective representation of time rather than objective delays. Read the paper [here](#).



Choice consistency in older adults: the effect of complexity

Reasoning about value is a fundamental element of decision-making. Behavioral studies suggest that young adults are usually able to make comparisons in a consistent way. However, studies on aging document behaviors reflecting difficulties in making comparisons between options, in particular

when options are complex. A recent LABEL study investigated consistency by asking participants to choose between bundles of goods of varying complexity. We found that older adults had a harder time selecting their preferred options compared to young adults but only when choices were sufficiently complex. This difficulty was associated with a decreased working memory performance. Working memory is a cognitive system that makes it possible for the brain to manipulate different pieces of information at the same time. Such ability is required to perform evaluations and comparisons of options. Our result suggests that complex economic choices may require higher working memory abilities. It is therefore plausible that the difficulty of older adults to make consistent complex choices is linked to age-related decline in a brain function that is critical for working memory. Read the paper [here](#).

Publications

The Path to Equilibrium in Sequential and Simultaneous Games, I. Brocas, J. Carrillo and A. Sachdeva, *Journal of Economic Theory*, 178, 246-274 (2018). [PDF](#)



Consistency in Simple vs. Complex Choices over the Life Cycle, I. Brocas, J. Carrillo, D. Combs and N. Kodaverdian, *Journal of Economic Behavior and Organization*, forthcoming. [PDF](#)

How long is a minute, I. Brocas, J. Carrillo and J. Tarraso. *Games and Economic Behavior*, 111, 305-322 (2018). [PDF](#)

Heuristic to Bayesian: the Evolution of Reasoning from Childhood to Adulthood, J. Barash, I. Brocas, J. Carrillo and N. Kodaverdian, *Journal of Economic Behavior and Organization*, forthcoming. [PDF](#)

Future events

April 1st, 2019 - The IEPR distinguished lecture series will host Eric Johnson (Columbia Business School)

For more information about upcoming events, please visit our [website](#).

Education

LABEL is dedicated to disseminating knowledge on experimental methods and to explaining why they help understand how we make decisions every day. For that purpose, we have designed **several courses and programs** for college and graduate students at USC. We also organize events in schools through our **Little Experimentalists Program** to teach students how to think about decisions in simple situations. Finally, our LABEL Internship Program allows students (10th grade and up) to participate in research activities in our group. Our lab is currently accepting applications for the internship program for the fall period. More information can be found [here](#).

Participate in our studies



If you are a **student or an employee** from the University of Southern California, you can register [here](#).

If you are a **parent living in Los Angeles** and would like your child to participate in our studies, you can register [here](#).

If you are **living in Los Angeles and are 18 and older** and would like to participate in our studies on decision-making over the life cycle, you can register [here](#).

All others, please contact us at label@dornsife.usc.edu



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