

USC Dornsife



The Los Angeles Behavioral Economics Laboratory (**LABEL**) is a research center led by Dr. Isabelle Brocas and Dr. Juan Carrillo, dedicated to the study of decision-making and its implications on life outcomes and markets. For more information on **LABEL**, please visit our [website](#).

New Research

The developmental trajectory of coordination strategies



Coordinating on the efficient and fair long run outcome (EFO) in the repeated versions of the battle of the sexes and the stag hunt games requires participants to share intentions and beliefs. Does the ability to coordinate develop or is it innate? By studying the behavior of children and adolescents (ages 7 to 16), we show a significant and remarkably stable increase with age in the ability to coordinate on the EFO. We also observe an ability to rapidly learn and improve play at all ages. Still, coordination in the battle of the sexes is more difficult than in the stag hunt game, which reflects the extra difficulty of coordination in strategies, as compared to actions.

I. Brocas and J. Carrillo, "[Dynamic coordination in efficient and fair strategies: a developmental perspective](#)", LABEL working paper.

Featured Research



The development of steps of reasoning

People exhibit significant heterogeneity in their ability to reason. This is particularly apparent in the context of strategic interactions. Can we tease out some of the contributors to this variation in ability? We

asked children, adolescents, and young adults to play strategic games in roles of varying complexity. Some roles did not require participants to reason about others, whereas other roles required them to anticipate the decisions of one or even two other players. Most participants were either able to think strategically in all roles or only when decisions did not require to reason about others. Performance increased significantly throughout elementary school and plateaued out afterward. Importantly, some very young children could reason correctly in all roles while some adults were not able to anticipate any decision by others. This suggests that innate ability is a contributor, besides age, to strategic reasoning.

I. Brocas and J. Carrillo, "[Steps of reasoning in children and adolescents](#)," Journal of Political Economy, 129 (7), 2067-2111, 2021.

Recent Publications

- I. Brocas and J. Carrillo, "[The development of randomization and deceptive behavior in mixed strategy games](#)", forthcoming in Quantitative Economics.
- I. Brocas and J. Carrillo, "[Steps of reasoning in children and adolescents](#)," Journal of Political Economy, 129 (7), 2067-2111, 2021.
- I. Brocas and J. Carrillo, "[Self-serving, altruistic and spiteful lying in the schoolyard](#)," Journal of Economic Behavior and Organization, 187, 159-175, 2021.

For more information about our research, please check [here](#).

Our team



Louisa Belian

We are welcoming Louisa as our new Project Specialist! Louisa is a graduate of the University of California, Berkeley where she studied Cognitive Science and Rhetoric.



Sacha Bazzal

Sacha, our former Project Specialist who had been working with LABEL since January 2020, has started a Masters program in Cognitive and Decision Sciences at University College London this fall.

Jake and Eliot are joining us in-person this fall. Jake recently graduated with a degree in Economics from Tulane University. Eliot has just finished high school and will join University College London next fall. Both of them will be researching the impact of early education programs on life outcomes.



Jake Levitt



Eliot Lee

We are also happy to welcome five returning students and eleven new students who are working remotely on current research projects as part of the LABEL Training Program. Meet our current [trainees](#)!

Announcements

Education at USC

LABEL disseminates knowledge regarding decision-making and the methods to study it. We sponsor [several courses and programs](#) for undergraduate, masters and PhD students at USC, all designed for students who wish to explore careers in the Behavioral Sciences as consultants, researchers, or policy makers.

PhD Applications

USC students who would like to express interest in completing their dissertation at LABEL should inform us by completing this [form](#). LABEL enrolls students who wish to study decision-making through interdisciplinary approaches.

Background: Cognitive Sciences, Economics, Neuroscience, or Computer Science.

Training the next generation of students

The **Little Experimentalists Program** organizes events in schools to teach students how to think startegically, and to inform parents and teachers about the development of cognition and decision-making.

The **LABEL Training Program** offers students (10th grade and up) the opportunity to participate in research activities in our group. Read about our trainees' experiences [here](#). Our lab is currently accepting [applications](#) for the Spring 2022 period (deadline is December 1st).



Participate in our studies

If you are a **student or an employee** from USC, register [here](#).

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

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

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



USC Dornsife

Dana and David Dornsife
College of Letters, Arts and Sciences