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The Role of Conferences on the Pathway to Academic Impact: Evidence from a Natural Experiment

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The Role of Conferences on the Pathway to Academic Impact: Evidence from a Natural Experiment*

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Abstract

This paper provides evidence for the role of conferences in generating visibility for academic work, using a 'natural experiment': the last-minute cancellation – due to 'Hurricane Isaac' – of the 2012 American Political Science Association (APSA) Annual Meeting. We assembled a dataset containing outcomes of 15,624 articles scheduled to be presented between 2009 and 2012 at the APSA meetings or at a comparator annual conference (that of the Midwest Political Science Association). Our estimates are quantified in difference-in-differences analyses: first using the comparator meetings as a control, then exploiting heterogeneity in a measure of session attendance, within the APSA meetings. We observe significant 'conference effects': on average, articles gain 17-26 downloads in the 15 months after being presented in a conference. The effects are larger for papers authored by scholars affiliated to lower tier universities and scholars in the early stages of their career. Our findings are robust to several tests.

JEL Classification: O39, I23, L38

Keywords: effects of conferences, diffusion of scientific knowledge

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1 Introduction

Conferences feature prominently in the dissemination strategies for most academic projects, and academics apportion a significant fraction of their own time and resources to attending (or organising) such events. The American Economic Association advertised close to 300 meetings in 2014, and in the field of medical science there is an estimated 100,000 meetings per year (Ioannidis, 2012). Remarkably, however, there is so far little scientific evidence for, or direct measurement of, the effectiveness of conferences in promoting the visibility of academic work. This paper addresses this important issue and provides a step forward in understanding the role of conferences on the pathway that leads from academic research to academic impact. We estimate the causal effects of a specific conference - the American Political Science Association (APSA) Annual Meeting - on the visibility of papers presented therein.

The APSA meeting is one of the largest and more important political science conferences, gathering close to 3,000 presenters every year, from more than 700 institutions. We utilise a 'natural experiment': the cancellation - due to 'Hurricane Isaac', at 48 hours' notice - of the 2012 meeting, which was scheduled to take place in New Orleans. By the time of the cancellation, the conference program had been fully arranged and was compositionally indistinguishable from previously occurring editions. There was therefore a unique opportunity to identify conference effects. We assembled a new dataset comprising 15,624 conference papers from 2009 to 2012. We matched these to outcomes collected from the Social Science Research Network (SSRN), including numbers of articles' views, downloads, citations, and downloads of conference authors' other work.

To quantify conference effects, we adopt a difference-in-differences approach, using a comparator large meeting - the Midwest Political Science Association (MPSA) - in the same discipline that was not cancelled. We examine how outcome patterns change in 2012 (first difference) in the APSA versus in the MPSA (second difference) meeting. We detect large and statistically significant conference effects in determining articles' visibility. On average, articles gain 17-26 downloads in the

15 months after being presented in the conference.

The existence of conference effects is also confirmed in a separate diff-in-diff analysis. We test whether the size of the audience in a session affects the number of downloads of articles presented. The audience per se is not observed: instead we use a constructed measure, of 'expected audience', based on information provided in the APSA Program. In creating this variable, we assume that an article's expected audience depends positively on the number of other conference articles in the same theme (assuming that participants sort into attending similar sessions of their own work) and negatively on the number of articles in this same theme being presented in parallel (that are competing for the same time-slot audience). If attendees download articles they see in presentations during the conference, papers being presented in well-attended sessions should have more views and downloads than articles presented in poorly attended ones. Furthermore, articles with a larger session audience (of potential downloaders and viewers) are expected to be the ones more negatively affected by the 2012 APSA meeting cancellation. Our results confirm this hypothesis, and indicate that every 11-16 'expected audience' members generate one download of the article presented. We present several econometric specifications and robustness checks to ensure the validation of our identification strategy: i.e. that we are not capturing other factors such as unobservable heterogeneity related to articles' download prospects or changes in the profession's demand/supply for research themes, instead of conference effects.

Then, we ask: who benefits more from presenting in conferences? Is the exposure more beneficial to already visible scholars or to less-known and newcomer authors? The answer is not obvious. One supposition might be that conferences are particularly important for less-known authors (and less important for better-known scholars) as a means to advertise their work. A countervailing supposition might be that already-visible scholars benefit by attracting large audiences within the conference, while less-known authors find their presentations less-attended and therefore less effective. In other words, conferences could plausibly either mitigate or

exacerbate a 'famous-get-famous effect'.[1][2]We examine conference effects by authors' affiliation[3] and previous SSRN publication status. The only statistically significant conference effects are for articles authored by scholars with no previous articles posted in SSRN and by scholars affiliated to lower tier schools: outside the Top 100. For authors in this last group, we find weak evidence that a positive effect is also noticed in other working papers posted shortly after the conference (within nine months of the conference). These results suggest that conferences increase the visibility not only of the presented articles, but also of their authors' work more generally. On the other hand, we find some evidence that for articles authored by someone in a Top 10 institution, the net effect of the conference, on article views, is actually negative. This suggests that a crowding out effect is in place, and that authors from lower tier institutions benefit at the expense of Top 10 institution authors.

Our paper demonstrates, using quasi-experimental evidence, that conferences have – overall - positive effects for presenting authors, at least in increasing the visibility of their papers in the medium term. It advances the literature in testing conference effects with a more compelling identification strategy, and in providing specific evidence about the mechanisms underlying the effects of conferences. Previous studies document the positive correlation between accepted conference papers and chance of publication and number of citations (Winnik et al 2012; Galang *et al* 2011; Lee *et al* 2012; Toma *et al* 2006). However, in such analysis, one cannot distinguish between the selection effect (the extent to which the conference selects for papers that are likely to have greater impact) and the conference effect (the extent to which the conference itself enhances a paper's impact). Closer to our paper, Blau *et al* (2010) adopt an experimental approach. They analyse the effects of a mentoring workshop for female junior professors whose attendance is decided on

[1] Or a 'Matthew Effect', as discussed by Merton (1968).

[2] A similar reinforcement effect has been documented by Salganik *et al* (2006) in an experiment in the music market.

[3] Authors' affiliation correlates with their academic output and visibility. As discussed and documented by Kim *et al* (2009), there is a selection of high-quality scholars into top ranked schools.

the basis of a randomized trial. The purpose of the workshop was to help attendees to build peer networks of junior faculty working in similar area. Blau et al find a large positive effect of attending the workshop in increasing junior scholars' chance of publication. To the extent that the workshop had similarities with academic meetings more generally, this finding provides some evidence for the existence of benefits of such events. Our results are in line with Blau *et al*'s findings.

The remainder of the paper is developed as follows. In section 2, we explain the data. In section 3, we present our results. In section 4 we conclude, noting parallels between our findings and recent work on the economics of science.

2 Data

2.1 The American Political Science Association and the Midwest Political Science Association Meetings

In investigating the effect of conferences, we focus on the case of the American Political Science Association (APSA) Annual Meeting. This is one of the largest conferences in political science, gathering close to 3,000 presenting papers per year. It occurs in the last week of August or the first week of September (always on the American Labor Day weekend), and it has four days of presentations of panels, posters, workshops, evening sessions, roundtables and themed panels.

The 2012 APSA meeting was due to take place in New Orleans and was scheduled to start on August 30, but was cancelled at very short notice, due to the approach of 'Hurricane Isaac'. The following announcement, on behalf of the APSA President, Bingham Powel, was published on August 29:

> "A primary function of the association is to provide the highest quality meeting experience possible. In light of revised information we have from local officials about the trajectory of Isaac, we now anticipate the potential for sustained rain, flooding, power outages and severely restricted transportation into the city on Thursday. Under these

circumstances, it is not prudent to convene the meeting."[4]

Hurricane Isaac itself originated from a 'tropical wave' (an atmospheric trough) that moved off the west coast of Africa around August 16 and manifested to a 'tropical storm' by August 21. A state of emergency was declared for Louisiana on August 26.[5] By the time of these events, the conference program was finished and publicly available, listing articles that were presumably similar to those in previous APSA meetings. We find supporting evidence for this presumption. The fraction of participants *by institution* is similar in the 2012 APSA meeting and in the 2009-2011 APSA meetings. A mean test does not reject the hypothesis, at the 10% level, that the fraction of participants from a given institution is the same in the 2012 (cancelled) APSA meeting and in the 2009-2011 (occurring) APSA meetings, for 82% of authors' institutions.

We use the 2012 cancellation as a 'natural experiment' to estimate various 'conference effects'. As a control group, we consider articles scheduled to be presented at the Midwest Political Science Association (MPSA) Annual Meeting. This conference takes place in April, before the APSA, so there is no concern that cancellation of the 2012 APSA meeting affected standards at the 2012 MPSA meeting. The APSA and the MPSA meetings are the largest conferences in the field of political science. The MPSA meeting is similar in profile, format and scale to that of the APSA. We focus on articles presented in panel sessions (which concentrate most of the participants). In both meetings, panel sessions are 1 hour and 45 minutes long and usually have four presenting papers, one chair and one or two discussants. The two meetings have a similar registration fee, and similar policies and procedures for paper submission and acceptance. Also, the APSA and the MPSA are professional associations of political science scholars in the United States, similar in terms of academic prestige. They publish the two main leading journals in the field, *The American Political Science Review* and *The American Journal of Political Science*, respectively.

[4] http://www.apsanet.org/content_82576.cfm?navID=988.

[5] http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hurricane_Isaac_(2012)

2.2 Sample and Sources

We assembled data on all papers and sessions presented in the APSA meeting from 2009-2012. This dataset comprised 12,055 presented articles. We also collected a random sample of 20% of papers presented in the MPSA Meeting from 2009-2012,[6] comprising 3,569 articles. Both datasets were derived from the conferences' programs available online. Our datasets include information on articles' title and their authorship, and the affiliation of all participants. To provide a better sense of the information conveyed in the data, in Figure A1 in the Appendix, we present a snapshot of two sessions scheduled for the 2012 APSA Meeting. Additionally, we collected information on the theme, day and time of each session.

A relevant difference between the APSA and MPSA meeting is that the MPSA meeting occurs five months before the APSA meeting. We account for this by performing our analysis using outcomes collected in different times. In constructing outcome variables, we used observations collected in August 2013 for MPSA articles, and in January 2014 for APSA articles.[7]

We collected articles' outcomes from the Social Science Research Network (SSRN). This is a leading website repository for academic working papers in the social sciences, boasting over 241,000 authors and more than 1.7 million users. Authors upload their papers without charge, and any paper an author uploads to SSRN is then downloadable for free.[8] In terms of outcomes, we track the number of SSRN articles' views, downloads[9] and citations.[10] Furthermore, we gathered the

[6] The MPSA has close to 60 (between 60 and 63) sessions for each day-time slot. We randomly selected sixteen sessions in each day-time slot, and collected information on session characteristics (time, day and theme) and all articles and participants in every session.

[7] Using monthly data from Repec, we checked whether there are seasonal effects on papers' downloads and views, and find none.

[8] http://www.ssrn.com/update/general/ssrn_faq.html

[9] Downloads are a measure of the number of times a paper has been delivered to an interested party either electronically as a PDF or as a Purchased Bound Hard Copy. Downloads are a primary measure used in ranking papers, authors and institutions on SSRN's Ranking Tables (Source: SSRN).

[10] SSRN citations are only a subset of total citations, including only those cited by other articles posted in SSRN.

combined number of downloads of working papers authored by each article's authors, posted on SSRN just after the conference (within nine months of the conference). In terms of predetermined characteristics, we also collected information on: the date the article was first posted on SSRN, the number of articles previously (to the conference) posted on SSRN by all the article's authors and the date of the earliest article published by any of the article authors.

SSRN is especially useful because, at the time of the conference, the papers due to be presented are largely unpublished and SSRN tracks their visibility at this stage. But specific challenges in tracking unpublished papers remain. Often, the titles of pre-published papers change over time. Indeed, authors' projects often develop, evolve, divide or combine in ways that mean one cannot objectively say whether a specific working paper is the same paper that was presented at a conference or not.[11] We experimented with different search criteria, and in order to increase our chances of finding conference articles, our final search was made based on authorship and the articles' title abbreviation. Systematic retrieval of SSRN data was commissioned from Mozenda. We recorded all cases for which the title in the paper retrieved differed significantly from the title in the conference program, based on a soundex search algorithm. In our main analysis, we consider all articles. However, all results hold (and in fact become stronger) when we restrict the sample only to articles with good title matches. In addition, a research assistant conducted a manual check on 900 randomly chosen articles (a sample of close to 5% of articles in the APSA or MPSA program) to verify the accuracy of our main dataset articles. For this sample, the articles found in the automatized search were 98.5% of the time precise. Nonetheless, our set of paper is not a complete list of conference papers posted in SSRN. Depending on the criteria used to define a match (same title and authors or only same authors), the manual search concludes that our list includes 66-88% of total conference papers posted in SSRN.[12]

[11] Most of the literature is focused on investigating the performance of published articles (Azoulay *et al* 2010, Furman and Stern, 2011, Borjas and Doran 2012; Waldinger 2012).

[12] The research assistant was aiming to answer three questions. First, of those articles that had been identified by the automated search, what proportion was erroneous? The answer to this was around 1.5%. Second, of those conference articles that could be discovered, with a high degree

Altogether, the automated search found 2,695 APSA articles and 107 MPSA articles. This is our main sample. A main reason for finding a larger fraction of APSA than MPSA articles (22% versus 3%) is that the APSA encourage accepted authors to post their articles in the SSRN APSA Annual Meeting Series, while there is no SSRN working paper series for the MPSA Meeting.

Articles were classified in one hundred and fifty-eight institution categories, according to author(s)' affiliation. These categories include all Top 100 institutions listed on the 2005 U.S. News ranking of Graduate Political Science Programs or in the 2011 Top 100 QS World University Rankings for politics. Articles authored by scholars affiliated to institutions in neither of these 'Top 100' lists, were classified in one category. (Most of the articles - 70.1% - were single-authored. If an article had more than one author, the author affiliated to the institution with the highest ranking was considered.)

Table A1 in the Appendix shows authors' affiliation by the following groups: for the entire list of APSA and MPSA articles from the programs (Columns 1 and 2) and the SSRN sample used in this paper's analysis (Columns 3 and 4). With respect to the universe of conference papers, there is some over-representation of APSA articles authored by lower tier affiliation authors in our sample and under-representation of APSA articles authored by lower tier affiliation authors in our sample. In the APSA (MPSA) Meeting Program, 40.6% (46.3%) of articles are authored by a scholar outside a Top 100 Institution. As shown in Column 3 (Column 4), this fraction is 46.9 % (42.5%) in our SSRN sample for APSA (MPSA) articles. Also to account for these differences, in our main regressions, we control for many covariates, including authors' affiliation fixed effects, and we replicate regressions for a subsample of APSA articles that most resemble the sample of MPSA articles (as will be detailed in the next Section). As a robustness check, we also conducted our analysis

of confidence (matching both authors and title) by a manual search on SSRN, what proportion had been missed by the automated search? The answer to this was around 12%. Third, of those conference articles that could be discovered, with a lower degree of confidence (matching the authors only) by a manual search on SSRN, what proportion had been missed by the automated search? The answer to this was around 34%, but the majority of the papers within this number had a substantially different title to the conference paper.

restricting the sample only to APSA articles, and using a different classification of control/treatment group, as explained in Section 3.2.1. In Section 3.2.3, we present tests for the validity of our identification approach. We replicate our main diff-in-diff regressions, but use author and article pre-determined characteristics as dependent variables. Overall, we conclude that 2012 APSA "treatment" articles do not differ systematically from "control" articles, in any way that confounds our causal estimates.

Table 1 presents summary statistics for all articles considered in the main analysis. We trimmed 5% of the sample (or 158 observations), excluding outliers with the largest and lowest number of downloads or views. On average, conference articles have been posted in SSRN for 1,115 days (or close to 3 years). They have accumulated 64 downloads and 297 views.

3 Results

3.1 Using the MPSA meeting as a control group

To quantify the effect of conferences, we adopt a difference-in-differences approach, considering the sample of articles in the programs of APSA or in the MPSA Annual Meetings between 2009 and 2012. In the treatment group are articles that were to be presented in the cancelled 2012 APSA meeting. We test the hypotheses that articles in the treatment group have reduced academic visibility, compared with articles that were scheduled to be presented in conferences that took place.

In Table 2, we present unconditional difference-in-differences in the mean number of downloads (Panel A) and views (Panel B) for APSA and MPSA for years in which both conferences took place (2009-2011) and the year in which the APSA meeting was cancelled (2012). It is noticeable that the difference in outcomes between 2012 and previous years is larger for APSA than for MPSA articles, suggesting a conference effect. The difference-in-differences for number of downloads is -16.7, for views is close to -55. (However, only the diff-in-diff for downloads is statistically significant at the 5% level.)

Next, we present our diff-in-diff estimates, adding controls. We estimate (1):

$$Y_i = \alpha + \beta_1(APSA \cdot 2012)_i + \beta_2 APSA_i + \sum_t^T \theta_t[T = 1] + \beta_3 X_i + \nu_i \qquad (1)$$

where, i indexes article and t indexes year. Y_i is the outcome observed in 2014, $APSA_i$ is a dummy indicating whether the article is in the APSA Meeting Program, $\sum_t^T \theta_t$ are year dummies, and $APSA \cdot 2012$ is an indicator for whether the article is in the 2012 APSA meeting program. The vector of covariate X_i includes author and article characteristics and ν_{it} is a random term. We cluster standard errors at the author affiliation-conference level. The conference impact is revealed by the coefficient β_1.

Table 3 Columns 1-4 show regression results when using as the dependent variable the number of downloads. In Column 1, we control for whether the article is authored by a scholar affiliated to a Top 10 institution and for number of authors. As proxies for authors' experience, we consider the aggregate number of papers posted in SSRN by all article i authors, and the earliest year that a paper was posted in SSRN, among all authors of article i. The estimates show that articles authored by a scholar affiliated to a Top 10 institution[13] have an additional 10.4 downloads, in comparison to other articles. They also indicate that articles have an extra 2.7 downloads for each additional author. To control for timing effects, we added year dummies, number of days the article has been in SSRN and its quadratic form. The results show that for each 36 days in SSRN, an article is expected to receive one additional download. This effect seems to be linear (at least for the period of four years of our sample), as the coefficient for its quadratic form is nearly zero and not statistically significant.

In Table 3, Column 1, the diff-in-diff coefficient and variable of interest that identifies the conference effect is negative (-17.83) and statistically significant at the 10% level. Column 2 includes authors' affiliation fixed effects. This set of variables is relevant in explaining articles' downloads. They are jointly statistically significant at the 5% level and they add to the regression explanatory power, leading to an

[13] An institution either in the top 10 of the 2005 U.S. News ranking of Graduate Political Science Programs or in the top 10 of the 2011 Top 100 QS World University Rankings for politics.

increase in the R-squared. For this specification, the size of the diff-in-diff coefficient increases (-21.12) and becomes statistically significant at the 5% level.

To account for the fact that the MPSA sample is small and these papers differ in some characteristics from the APSA, as shown in Table A1, we conducted regressions restricting the sample to the MPSA articles and only those APSA articles that are sufficiently similar the MPSA articles. To find this group, we estimated a propensity score based on a logit model that controls for authors' characteristics and time variables as described in the most complete specification (in Table 3, Column 2). We consider APSA articles whose propensity score are in the 95 percentile. The diff-in-diff coefficient for this sample is statistically significant at the 5% level, for the most complete specification (Column 4) and when replicating the control, but excluding author affiliation fixed effects (Column 3). The coefficients in Columns 1-4 indicate that, on average, articles in the 2012 APSA conference would have benefited from, approximately, an extra 17-26 downloads in the 15 months after the conference if Hurricane Isaac had not occurred.

In Table 3, Columns 5-6 we test whether there is a conference effect on the number of views. We consider the specification in Column 2, and conduct regressions for the whole sample (Columns 5) and the restricted propensity score sample (Columns 6). There is some evidence that conferences impact positively articles' numbers of views, detected in the restricted sample. According to Table 3, Column 6, on average, an article in the 2012 APSA conference received 92 fewer views on SSRN than might have been expected had the conference taken place.

3.2 Testing for an Alternative Control Group

3.2.1 Effects of the Session Audience on Articles' Visibility

Next, we check whether the results in Section 3.1 are robust to a different control group. Instead of looking for a different conference for comparison to the APSA Meeting (the MPSA meeting being the closest one), we focus our investigation within the sample of APSA articles, but explore heterogeneity in the session audience. We conjecture articles that would have had a higher audience were more hindered by the

2012 APSA meeting cancelation. We conduct difference-in-differences regressions to test the hypothesis that the number of downloads is lower for articles with higher (expected) audience, in the 2012 cancelled conference, than in previous editions.

Before presenting results, we explain our measure for 'Expected Audience'. In creating this variable, we followed the observation that attendees/authors tend to sort into attending sessions related to their own research interest. Expected Audience$_i$ is a function of the total number of articles in the same theme as article i across the meeting t in which i was presented (T_i), the number of articles to be presented in the same time slot and theme as article i but in a different session (O_i), and the number of co-synchronous sessions on the same theme as article i (S_i). (The crude intuition here is that the audience in a given session will be drawn from the pool of other authors whose papers at the conference are on the theme of the session, excluding the article's own author, divided equally across the simultaneous sessions on this theme.)

$$\text{Expected Audience}_i \equiv \frac{T_i - O_i - 1}{S_i} \tag{2}$$

In constructing this variable, we used the APSA Meeting classification of articles (and sessions) in 132 session themes (eg. Public Opinion, Normative Political Theory, Political Psychology, Legislative Studies, Canadian Politics).[14] The average

[14]They include 52 main theme panels (that contain 90% of the articles) and 70 remaining themes that vary per year. The main theme sections are Political Thought and Philosophy, Foundations of Political Theory, Normative Political Theory, Formal Political Theory, Political Psychology, Political Economy, Politics and History, Political Methodology, Teaching and Learning, Political Science Education, Comparative Politics, Comparative Politics of Developing Countries, The Politics of Communist and Former Communist Countries, Advanced Industrial Societies, European Politics and Society, International Political Economy, International Collaboration, International Security, International Security and Arms Control, Foreign Policy, Conflict Processes, Legislative Studies, Presidency Research, Public Administration, Public Policy, Law and Courts, Constitutional Law and Jurisprudence, Federalism and Intergovernmental Relations, State Politics and Policy, Urban Politics, Women and Politics Research, Race, Ethnicity, and Politics, Religion and Politics, Representation and Electoral Systems, Political Organizations and Parties, Elections and Voting Behavior, Public Opinion, Political Communication, Science, Technology, and Environmental Politics, Information Technology and Politics, Politics, Literature, and Film,

of articles' Expected Audience is 53. In the Appendix, we show the histograms of Expected Audience$_i$ per conference year.

In Figure 1, we show the relationship between future downloads and articles' Expected Audience for the 2009-2011 editions (in which the conference took place). In Figure 2, we illustrate this relationship for the sample of articles in the 2012 program, when the conference was cancelled. Each dot indicates an article. To ease visualization, we plot a linear regression line in both figures. While a positive relationship is visible in Figure 1; practically none is observed in Figure 2. The slope of the line in Figure 1 is 0.111 and it is statistically significant at the 5% level, while the slope in Figure 2 is 0.015, with a respective p-value of 66%. Figure 1, as opposed to Figure 2, shows that (future) articles' downloads are increasing with the number of other participants in the same theme in the conference.

This relationship suggests that attendees will be downloading articles they see during conference sessions.[15] This mechanism in turn implies a conference impact. We investigate this further in a regression framework, in which we estimate (3).

$$Y_i = \gamma + \delta_1 ExpectAudience_i \cdot 2012 + \delta_2 ExpectAudience_i + \sum_t^T \lambda_t [T = 1] + \delta_3 X_i + \epsilon_i \tag{3}$$

The impact of the conference is identified from the interaction from the variable Expected Audience with a dummy for the 2012 cancelled conference, and the coefficient of interest is δ_1. Differently from the analysis in the last section, here, we only quantify a part of conference effects. There are other conference possible benefits, not quantified by coefficient δ_1. (For example, articles may have experienced improvements due to advice from discussants or chairs, leading to an increase in articles' visibility.)

New Political Science, International History and Politics, Comparative Democratization, Human Rights, Qualitative and Multi-method Research, Sexuality and Politics, Health Politics and Policy, Canadian Politics, Political Networks, Experimental Research.

[15] Alternatively, attendees can view and download articles, just by looking at the APSA Meeting Program, when at the conference. We perform tests with slightly modified variable (Modified Expected Audience$_i$= T_i - 1) and find the same results, as the ones in Figures 1 and 2, and the same results that we will report in Tables 4-6.

Back to the results, in Table 4, we present results when clustering errors at the theme level. In Column 1, we begin with the specification controlling for authors' characteristics and a polynomial for the number of days the article has been posted in SSRN. Consistent with Figures 1 and 2, the coefficient δ_1, is negative (-0.1073) and statistically significant at the 5% level. In Column 2, we added 131 theme fixed effects (that are jointly statistically significant at the 1% level). This is our baseline specification. In Column 3, we include author affiliation fixed effects. We find practically the same results as in Column 1: the diff-in-diff coefficient is statistically significant at 5% and its magnitude does not change (-0.1091). The robustness of the diff-in-diff coefficient size to different sets of controls reflects the situation of random assignment of articles to the conditions of cancelled vs occurring conferences, determined by the hurricane in 2012.

For the baseline specification in Column 2, the Expected Audience coefficient is identified based on variation in the number of articles within-theme over years, and the number of same-theme sessions occurring simultaneously, per conference. There is a concern that the Expected Audience variable is endogenous, correlated with unobservables related to articles' quality or impact potential. These might be observed by conference organizers, internalised by the allocation of articles to sessions in the program, and captured by the Expected Audience variable. For example, the organizers might allow cosynchronicity of sessions comprising weaker articles within a given theme to a greater extent than of those comprising the most promising articles. (In this case, the diff-in-diff coefficient still captures a causal effect, but it is the return of articles' quality from presenting in a conference.)

In Column 4, we include 16 dummies for the session time-day slot that the article has been allocated (they are not jointly statistically significant: the p-value for an F-test is 32%). The diff-in-diff coefficient remains statistically significant and the magnitude does not change. As an extra check, we instrumented articles' Expected Audience with the average Expected Audience of articles with the same theme and affiliation.[16] The results are reported in Column 5. The size of the diff-in-diff

[16] We predicted articles' Expected Audience based on the average Expected Audience of articles with the same theme and the same author affiliation, and replace this prediction on equation 2.

coefficient increases to -0.1317, and it is statistically significant at the 10% level.

It is also possible that the variable Expected Audience is in fact capturing variation in number of submissions by theme, correlated with fashions in the profession and articles' prospective downloads. To account for this, in Column 6, we present results for the baseline specification, including session themes time-trends to control for possible different time trends across articles from different themes. The size of the diff-in-diff coefficient decays to 0.0639, but is still negative and statistically significant at the 12% level. Overall, estimates for δ_1 indicate that for each 8-16 articles in the same theme and conference year, there is an increase of one download for article i. Considering the distribution of the Expected Audience variable, on average, an article gains between 3.4 to 7 downloads, from the session audience in the APSA conference, in the 15 months following the meeting.

A different source of heterogeneity for articles' visibility in the conference relates to the allocated session time slot. Sessions occurring in the first slot are often perceived to be poorly attended: in the APSA Meeting, these occur on Thursday at 8am, when conference participants are still arriving and registering. Our test consists in examining whether articles allocated to the slot of Thursday 8 AM in the cancelled 2012 APSA Meeting have higher downloads (relative to articles allocated to other slots) than articles allocated to the first session in the previous APSA meetings.

As a remedy for the conference cancellation, the APSA sent a hard copy of the program to all participants. It is therefore possible that authors (notwithstanding the cancellation) gained some visibility and we estimate a lower bound for the conference effect. However, in 2012, an article's allocation to the first time slot should not cause an increase in downloads, unless authors are less likely to attend first sessions and more likely to download articles that they see the presentation. We test whether there is a "conference first session" effect by estimating equation (3). We replace Expected Audience by an indicator for whether article i is assigned to the first session. In Table 4, Column 7 we present the results replicating our baseline specification. They are supportive of our hypothesis. The coefficient for the article

This is a strong instrument: the F-statistics for first stage regression is 3760.

allocation in the first section in 2012 is positive and statistically significant at 10%. In Column 8 we report results also including author affiliation fixed effects. The magnitude of the coefficient remains the same, but the coefficient is only statistically significant at the 12% level.

3.2.2 Heterogeneous Effects of Conference Effects by Authorship

For various reasons, one may expect some heterogeneity, by authorship, of conference effects. Conferences gathers a group of unpublished articles. In its absence, any article has a pre-determined readership, based (at least in part) on its authors' characteristics: their institutional affiliation, the existing visibility of their previous papers, etc. In this section, we investigate whether there are differential conference effects by such characteristics. Articles with high author pre-determined readership may benefit more from the conference due to unbalanced sorting of attendees into their presenting sessions. But, on the other hand, for these articles there may be less to gain: academics interested in the topic would have become aware of the articles anyway. Indeed, it is conceivable that the conference may lead such articles to lose readers, as interested academics become aware of other work by less established authors. (The analogous reasoning can be applied to articles with a lower author pre-determined readership: they may have a smaller audience in the conference, but they may enjoy a more significant advertisement effect, and have fewer existing readers to lose due to competition to other articles). The net effect of these forces will determine the size and sign of the conference effect. In our analysis, we use two proxies for this author pre-determined readership: (i) authors' institutional affiliation (by tier), and (ii) whether the authors have a previous paper posted in SSRN. Kim *et al* (2009) and Oyer (2006) show that scholars affiliated to higher tier institutions are more cited and have a higher chance of publishing in top journals. Therefore, it is reasonable to assume that on average their pre-determined readership is higher. Likewise, more senior and well-known authors are more likely to have previous articles posted in SSRN.

In Table 5, Columns 2-6 we look for heterogeneous conference effects, based on these two characteristics. In Table 5, Column 1 we report results considering the

whole sample and using controls from our baseline specification. In Columns 2 and 3, we examine a conference effect by previous publication in SSRN. The diff-in-diff coefficient is negative for both groups, but only statistically significant at 6% for articles authored by newcomers in SSRN (Column 3).

In the remaining columns in Table 5, we present the conference effect by tier affiliation. In Column 4, we restrict the sample to articles authored by scholars affiliated to a Top 10 institution; in Column 5 to articles by scholars within the group of Top 100 institutions, but below the Top 10; and in Column 6 to articles by scholars outside the group of Top 100 institutions. The diff-in-diff coefficient is negative and statistically significant, at the 5% level, only for articles authored by scholars affiliated to institutions outside the Top 100 (Column 6). *This suggests that the session attendance effect is only present and positive for these articles.*

Of note, the relationship between articles' future downloads and Expected Audience differs by authors' affiliation. It is positive for authors outside a Top 10 university (Columns 5 and 6), indicating the positive correlation between the number of attendees (possible readers) presenting on the same theme and article future downloads. On the other hand, this association is negative for authors affiliated to a Top 10 institution. The conference appears to produce a "stealing effect" on authors affiliated to top schools that offsets the positive effect of the conference. In Table A2 in the Appendix, we present results replicating the regressions in Table 6, but using as the dependent variable the number of views. We find that articles authored by a scholar in a Top 10 institution benefitted from the conference cancellation, while there are no statistically significant impacts for other articles. The diff-in-diff coefficient on views is 1.264 and is statistically significant at the 5% level. This finding provides some evidence that the cancellation of the 2012 APSA Annual Meeting actually benefited authors from Top 10 institutions, and that there is a *negative net conference effect* for articles authored by these scholars.

Next, we examine whether the conference has other effects beyond visibility of the articles presented: on visibility of authors' other work. Using information from authors' SSRN profile, we gathered information on the number of downloads from other articles posted in SSRN in the nine months following the conference. For

example, for an article i presented in the 2010 APSA Meeting (September 2010), this variable is the combined number of SSRN downloads of all articles posted by all authors of article i, excluding article i, from September 2010 to April 2011. Table 6 present results, using this measure as the dependent variable, replicating the specifications and data decomposition in Table 5. The diff-in-diff coefficient is only statistically significant at the 10% level, and negative for the group of articles authored by scholars outside the Top 100. This suggests that, for these scholars, the APSA Meeting increases the visibility not only of the presented article but also of their wider portfolio.

3.2.3 Robustness Checks

As mentioned before, the distribution of APSA articles' authorship between 2012 and 2009-11 is very similar. However, our results are based only on a subset of articles: those whose authors uploaded their working papers or abstracts in SSRN. This can introduce some selection bias in the data. It is possible that other factors, correlated with different choice criteria over the years, are confounding our estimates of conference effects. (For example, if the conference cancellation increased the likelihood of lower quality articles being posted in SSRN). In the regressions in Table A3 in the Appendix, we investigate this issue. We present results, replicating our main diff-in-diff regressions but using author and article pre-determined characteristics as the explained variables. We find some correlations, but these are not worrying. In Columns 1 and 2, we show that 2012 APSA articles are more likely to be written by more experienced authors. This characteristic is positively correlated with articles' downloads, suggesting that our estimates for conference effects are underestimated. This selection also explains why the conference effects estimated based on the propensity score sample (Table 3, Columns 3, 4 and 6) are larger than the ones considering the whole sample (Table 3, Columns 1, 2 and 5). We also find correlations between authors' characteristics and their articles' Expected Audience in 2012 (Table A3, Columns 3 and 4). However, these magnitudes are close to zero. These findings largely support our claim that the 2012 "treatment" articles do not differ systematically from the "control" articles,

validating our identification strategies in Sections 2.1 and 3.2.

4 Conclusion

In this article, we provide estimates for the effects of conferences, exploring a natural experiment. To our knowledge, our results are unprecedented. They are important, given that large numbers of scholars attend conferences in all fields of science, and yet so little scientific causal evidence is documented. The APSA Meeting itself gathers close to 3,000 participants each year. We provide estimates for the medium term effects of conferences. We find a positive conference impact on articles' downloads 15 months after the academic meeting. (We do not find a conference effect on SSRN citations, as shown in Table A4 in the Appendix, but this might be because it is too early to detect them.)

Large academic meetings, like the APSA Meeting, tend to gather scholars from variously ranked institutions and at various points in their careers (including both faculty and students). We exploit this facet to understand who benefits from attending conferences. We find that authors from lower tier institutions and newcomers are those that gain visibility, in having the number of article downloads increased. We find some weak evidence that a crowding out effect is in place, decrementing download prospects for articles with authors from top ranked institutions. These are more visible authors (Kim *et al*, 2009) and, hence, have a "larger readership to lose" from competing authors and articles, in the same research field and in the same conference.[17]

Our results also resonate with the literature related to the consequences of the decreasing communication costs among academics (Agrawal and Goldfarb, 2008; Ding, Levin, Stephan and Winkle, 2010). In this literature the internet has been used as a main example, but conferences also facilitate communications via face-

[17] A similar type of crowding out effect among scientists has been found by Borjas and Doran (2009). They document that American mathematicians (more visible authors) suffered with a decrease of publications and citations, with the increase in competition from Soviet mathematicians (less visible), that became imminent with the influx of soviet migration to the US post-1992, with the fall of communism.

to-face interactions. Agrawal and Goldfarb (2008) find that the introduction of the internet has mainly benefited the publication prospects of middle tier-universities (by increasing the likelihood of collaboration with higher tier-universities). Like them, we find that conferences lead to a decrease of inequality of impact across institutions, with a relative increase in the visibility of articles authored by those affiliated to lower tier institutions. Our next step is to investigate whether conferences have an impact in determining the emergence of collaborations and multi-institutional collaborations, and also whether and how attendees benefit from the peers, such as other presenting authors in the same section, discussants and chairs, that they meet in the conference.

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Figure 1: Articles in an Ocurred conference (APSA:2009-11)

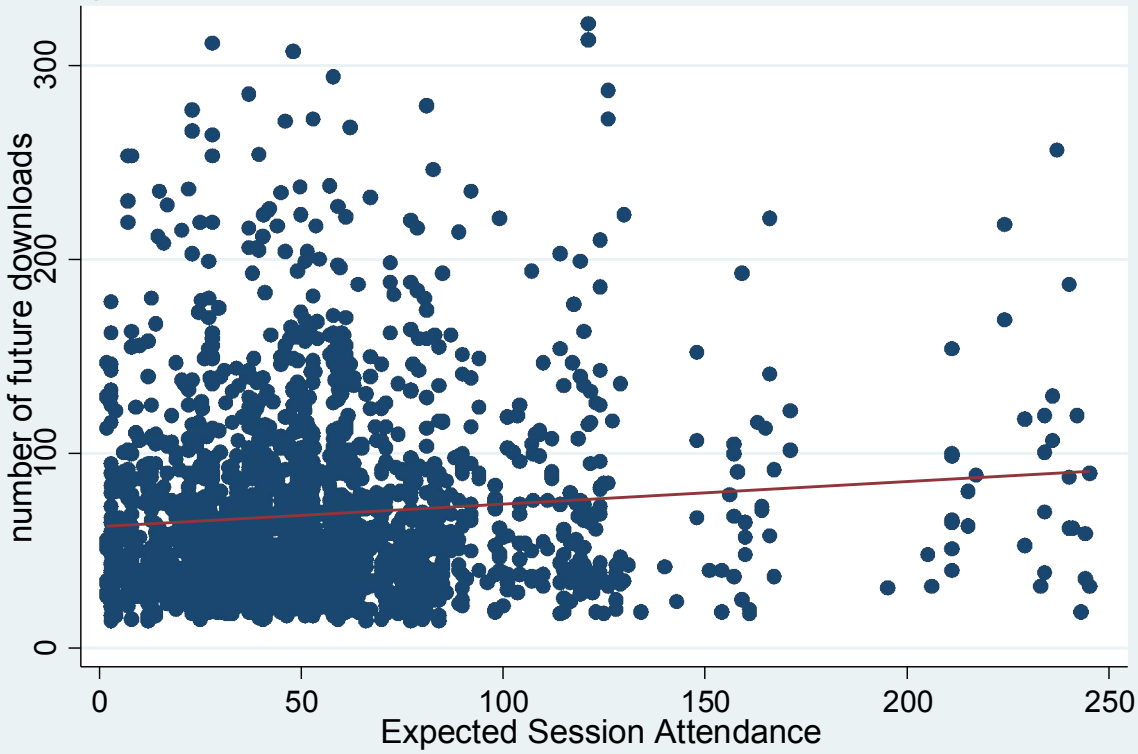


Figure 2: Articles in the Cancelled conference (APSA:2012)

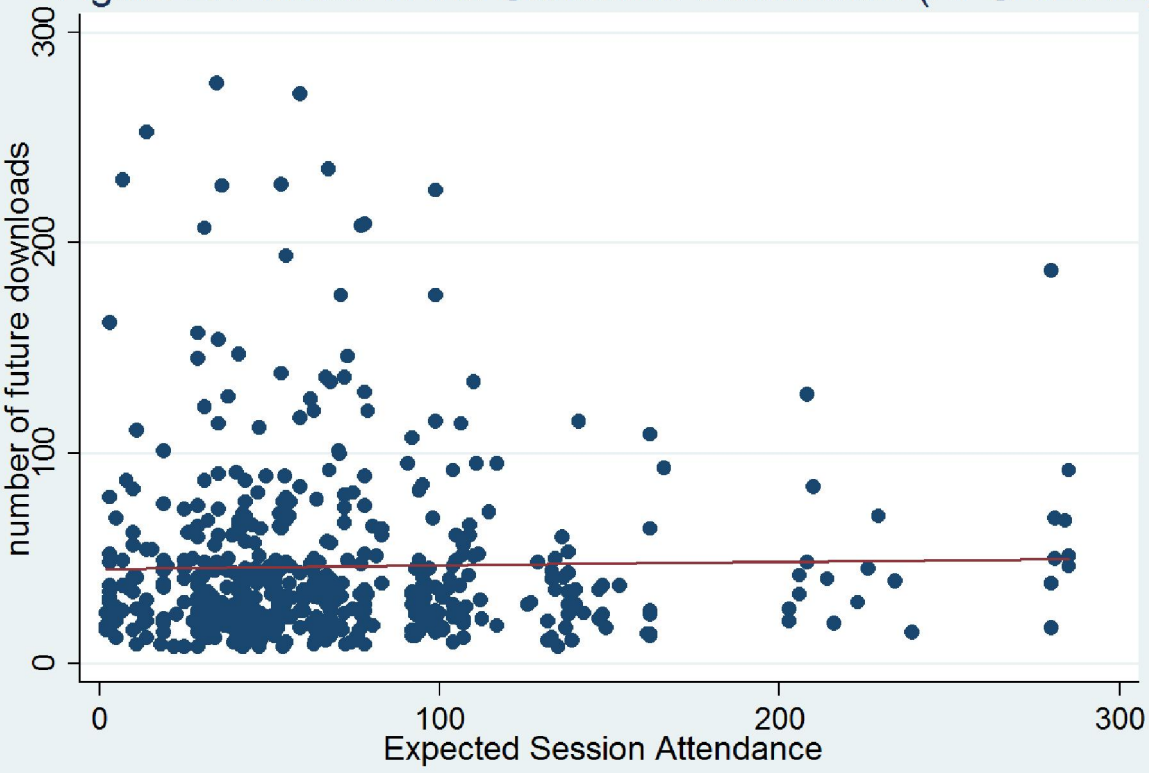


Table 1 - Summary Statistics

	Mean	Stand Deviation	Minimum	Maximum	Observations
Outcomes					
Number of article downloads	63.97	47.24	6	321	2,799
Number of article views	297.51	195.44	21	1,889	3,215
Number of downloads from other articles posted in SSRN, by author of article i, within nine months of the conference	16.43	127.73	0	5,387	2,799
Number of SSRN article citations	0.16	0.71	0	14	2,799
Article Characteristics					
Author is from a Top 10 institution	0.10	0.30	0	1	2,795
Author is from a]Top 10, Top 100] Institution	0.43	0.50	0	1	2,795
Author is from a Institution below Top 100	0.47	0.50	0	1	2,795
Number of authors	1.37	0.66	0	4	2,799
Number of articles previously posted in SSRN by article' author(s)	1.71	5.60	0	174	2,785
Conference year minus Earliest year an article was posted in SSRN by any of the article authors	1.40	2.48	0	15	2,785
Number of days article i in SSRN	1,115	426	0	4,786	2,785
APSA article	0.96	0.19	0	1	2,799
2012	0.20	0.40	0	1	2,799
2011	0.27	0.44	0	1	2,799
2010	0.26	0.44	0	1	2,799
2009	0.27	0.44	0	1	2,799

Note: The number of observations on views is larger than downloads because this sample also includes articles that only have an abstract posted.

Table 2: Averages

	Before 2012	2012	Difference
Panel A: Number of Downloads			
APSA' Articles	68.6	46.4	-22.2
MPSA' Articles	59.7	54.2	-5.5
			-16.7
Panel B: Number of Views			
APSA' Articles	345.0	215.8	-129.2
MPSA' Articles	375.4	302.1	-73.4
			-55.8

Note: The period before 2012 corresponds to 2009-2011. The total sample size is 2,799.

Table 3: Effects of Conferences on the Number of Articles' Downloads and Views

Dependent Variable:	Number of Downloads				Number of Views	
	[1]	[2]	[3]	[4]	[5]	[6]
APSA x 2012	**-17.8348**	**-21.1240**	**-21.9770**	**-26.4020**	**-50.0370**	**-92.2368**
	[10.206]*	**[10.303]****	**[10.908]****	**[11.756]****	**[44.935]**	**[43.276]****
Author is from a Top 10 Institution	10.3690		6.8270			
	[3.8842]**		[4.959]			
Number of Authors	2.7020	2.8003	1.3350	1.3280	19.1370	10.0547
	[1.513]*	[1.342]**	[2.730]	[2.340]	[5.6779]**	[10.297]
Number of articles previously posted in SSRN by all article's authors	1.465	1.482	-0.622	0.9987	0.2591	5.7953
	[3.081]	[3.372]	[4.901]	[5.683]	[1.3416]	[2.0953]**
Conference year minus Earliest year an article was posted in SSRN by any of the article authors	1.3070	1.1570	2.2820	2.1050	7.4006	7.2480
	[0.5809]**	[0.589]**	[1.103]**	[1.344]	[2.8583]**	[4.5461]
APSA	7.0590	5.1070	12.9550	10.2060	-12.6727	6.2647
	[5.0803]	[4.819]	[5.474]**	[7.809]	[22.9161]	[33.7213]
2012	7.9710	13.8360	4.2570	8.9890	17.0822	-17.0246
	[11.764]	[11.933]	[13.647]	[14.517]	[56.6331]	[67.619]
2011	2.7009	4.3930	1.3820	3.9890	39.6097	-6.2722
	[3.574]	[3.611]	[6.021]	[6.614]	[17.1298]**	[33.5500]
2010	-2.8570	-1.6540	-2.6540	0.0909	-12.7188	-27.8600
	[2.313]	[2.245]	[5.133]	[6.174]	[8.0335]	[21.827]
Number of Days in SSRN	0.0276	0.0304	0.0239	0.0046	0.0611	-0.2180
	[0.0089]**	[0.0091]**	[0.0123]*	[0.0167]	[0.05097]	[0.1012]
(Number of Days in SSRN)^2	0.0000	0.0000	0.0000	0.0000	0.0000	0.0000
	[0.0000]	[0.0000]	[0.0000]*	[0.0000]	[0.0000]**	[0.0000]
Sample	All	All	Propensity Score	Propensity Score	All	Propensity Score
Author affiliation fixed effects (N=158)	no	yes	no	yes	yes	yes
R-square	0.0615	0.1084	0.0613	0.216	0.1369	0.1958
N	2,781	2,781	824	824	3,193	966

Notes: The dependent variable refers to the outcome by January 2014 if it is an APSA paper, or the outcome by August 2013 if it is an MPSA paper.

The number of observations in [5] is larger than in [2] because the sample in [5] also includes articles that only have an abstract posted.

Robust standard errors clustered at the author affiliation-conference level are in brackets.

** Significant at the 5% level, * Significant at the 10% level

Table 4 - Effects of Conferences on the Number of Articles' Downloads

	[1]	[2]	[3]	[4]	[5]	[6]	[7]	[8]
Method	OLS	OLS	OLS	OLS	IV	OLS	OLS	OLS
APSA 2012 x Expected Audience	**-0.1073**	**-0.1038**	**-0.1091**	**-0.1071**	**-0.1317**	**-0.0639**		
	[0.04720]**	**[0.0496]****	**[0.0534]****	**[0.0544]****	**[0.0763]***	**[0.0398]**		
Expected Audience	0.1113	0.1006	0.0672	0.071	-0.0019	0.0659		
	[0.0366]**	[0.0579]	[0.0440]	[0.0444]	[0.0865]	[0.0478]		
APSA 2012 X First Session							**14.352**	**14.508**
							[8.330]*	**[9.075]**
First Session (Thursday 8AM)							-6.031	-5.122
							[3.108]**	[3.148]
Controls								
Session theme fixed-effects (N=131)	no	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes
Author affiliation fixed effects (N=158)	no	no	yes	yes	yes	yes	no	yes
Session time-day slot fixed-effects (N=12)	no	no	no	yes	no	no	no	no
Session theme- time trends	no	no	no	no	no	yes	no	no
Author characteristics +polynomials for number of days in SSRN	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes
R-square	0.067	0.117	0.185	0.188	0.184	0.218	0.138	0.1846
N	2,686	2,686	2,682	2,682	2,682	2,682	2,682	2,682

Notes: The sample includes only APSA articles. The dependent variable is the number of downloads by January 2014. The variable expected audience is explained in the text.

In [5], article' expected audience is instrumented with the average expected audience of articles authored by scholar with the same affiliation and theme.

Robust standard errors clustered at the theme level are in brackets.

** Significant at the 5% level, * Significant at the 10% level

Table 5 - Heterogenous Effects: Effects of Conferences on Articles' Downloads

		Author has a previous paper in SSRN		Author affiliation		
Sample :	All	Yes	No	Top 10	bellow Top 10 and within Top 100	bellow Top 100
	[1]	[2]	[3]	[4]	[5]	[6]
2012 x Expected Audience	**-0.1038**	**-0.086**	**-0.1737**	**0.2938**	**-0.1367**	**-0.1828**
	[0.0496]**	**[0.0659]**	**[0.0902]***	**[0.2480]**	**[0.0867]**	**[0.0630]****
Expected Audience	0.1006	0.0712	0.0529	-0.1715	0.0757	0.1156
	[0.0579]	[0.0534]	[0.0528]	[0.1030]*	[0.0379]**	[0.0565]**
Controls						
Session theme fixed-effects (N=131)	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes
Author affiliation fixed effects (N=158)	no	yes	yes	no	no	no
Others	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes
R-square	0.1379	0.2767	0.2015	0.3111	0.1689	0.1877
N	2,686	1,197	1,485	256	1,164	1,262

Notes: The sample includes only APSA articles. The dependent variable is the number of downloads by January 2014. The variable expected audience is explained in the text. Other controls include conference year fixed effects, number of days in SSRN, the square of the number of days in SSRN, number of authors, number of articles previously posted in SSRN by all article's authors and conference year minus earliest year an article was posted in SSRN by any of the article authors.
Robust standard errors clustered at the theme level are in brackets.
** Significant at the 5% level, * Significant at the 10% level

Table 6 - Heterogenous Effects: Effects of Conferences on Authors' other SRNN articles downloads

		Author has a previous paper in SSRN		Author affiliation		
	All	Yes	No	Top 10	bellow Top 10 and within Top 100	bellow Top 100
	[1]	[2]	[3]	[4]	[5]	[6]
2012 x Expected Audience	**0.0119**	**0.0019**	**-0.1040**	**0.3732**	**-0.0616**	**-0.0742**
	[0.0673]	**[0.1744]**	**[0.1093]**	**[0.3455]**	**[0.0854]**	**[0.0449]***
Expected Audience	-0.0609	-0.1006	-0.0718	-0.0979	-0.0446	0.0369
	[0.0392]	[0.0775]	[0.0572]	[0.1873]	[0.0495]	[0.0345]
Controls						
Session theme fixed-effects (N=131)	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes
Author affiliation fixed effects (N=158)	yes	yes	yes	no	no	no
Others	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes
R-square	0.2843	0.3323	0.2144	0.4964	0.2647	0.122
N	2,687	1,198	1,485	256	1,165	1,220

Notes: The sample includes only APSA articles. The dependent variable is the number of downloads from other articles posted in SSRN, by author of article i, within nine months after the conference. The variable expected audience is explained in the text. Other controls include conference year fixed effects, number of days in SSRN, the square of the number of days in SSRN, number of authors, number of articles previously posted in SSRN by all article's authors and conference year minus earliest year an article was posted in SSRN by any of the article authors.

Robust standard errors clustered at the theme level are in brackets.

** Significant at the 5% level, * Significant at the 10% level

APPENDIX

Figure 1

EUROPEAN POLITICS AND SOCIETY
15-6 THE POLITICAL AND HISTORICAL ORIGINS OF DEMOCRACY AND THE WELFARE STATE
Room: Marriott St. Charles
Chair: Marius R. Busemeyer, University of Konstanz
Papers: Two Paths to Democracy
Torben Iversen, Harvard University
David Soskice, Oxford University

The Historical Origins of Primary Education Regimes
Ben William Ansell, University of Minnesota, Twin Cities
Johannes Lindvall, Lund University

Imagine All the People: Why Do Nations Hold Such Diverse Views of Taxes and the Public Sector?
Cathie Jo Martin, Boston University

The Partisan Foundations of Education and Training Systems
Marius R. Busemeyer, University of Konstanz
Disc: Silja Häusermann, University of Konstanz

PUBLIC POLICY
15-6 THE POLITICS OF HEALTH REFORM
Room: Sheraton Napoleon C2
Co-sponsored by 48 Health Politics and Policy-1
Chair: Lorraine Frisina Doetter, University of Bremen
Papers: Institutional Entrepreneurs and the Politics of Redesigning the Welfare State: the Case of Health Care
Carolyn Hughes Tuohy, University of Toronto

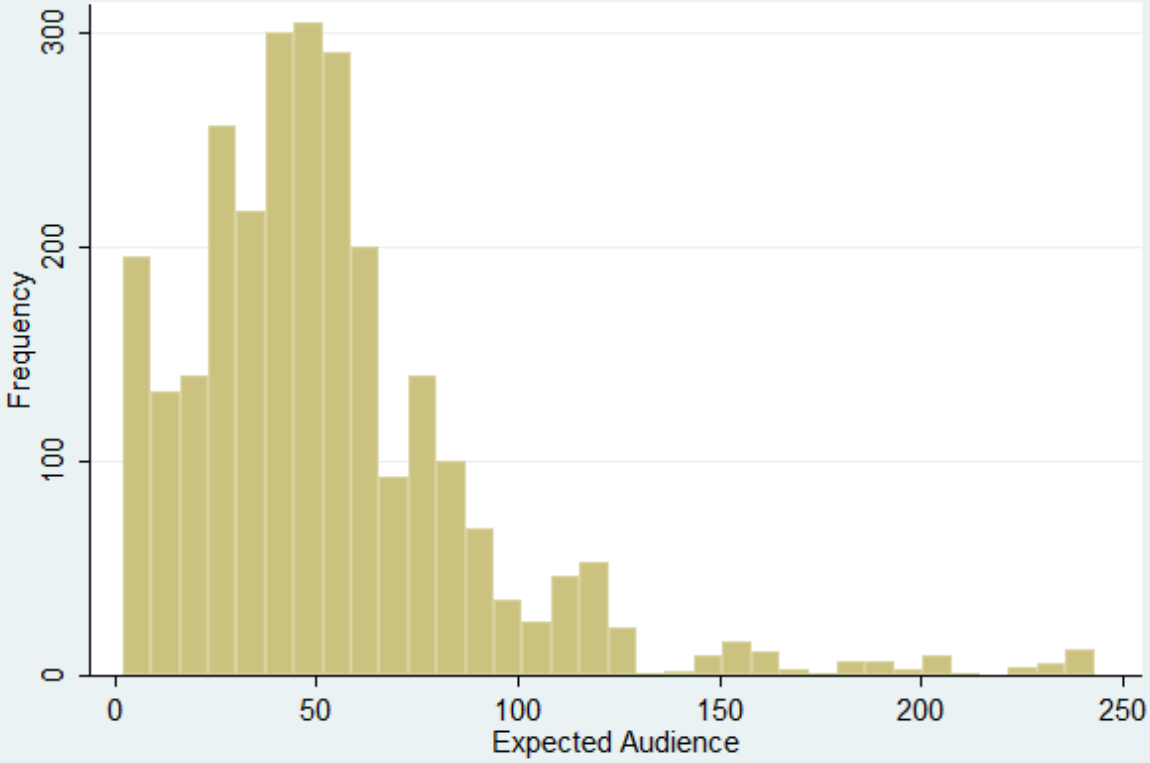
How to Bend the Cost Curve? An Idea Review
James M. Brasfield, Webster University

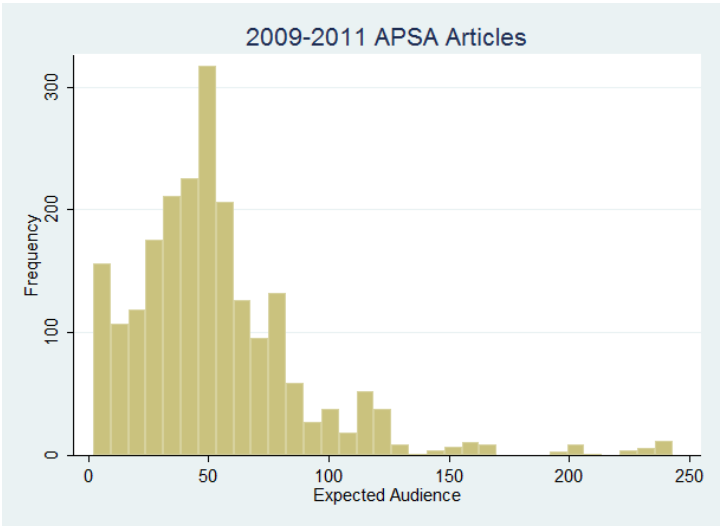
"Rights Without Access": The Political Context of Rising Social Inequality in Access to Health Care
Ling Zhu, University of Houston
Jennifer Hayes Clark, University of Houston

A Dream Deferred: Americans' Insecurities and Political Attitudes in the Aftermath of Economic Shocks
Mark Schlesinger, Yale University

Women in Politics, Women's Health, and the Affordable Care Act
Sue Tolleson-Rinehart, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill
Disc: Michael S Sparer, Columbia University

Figure A2: Sample APSA articles: 2009 - 2012





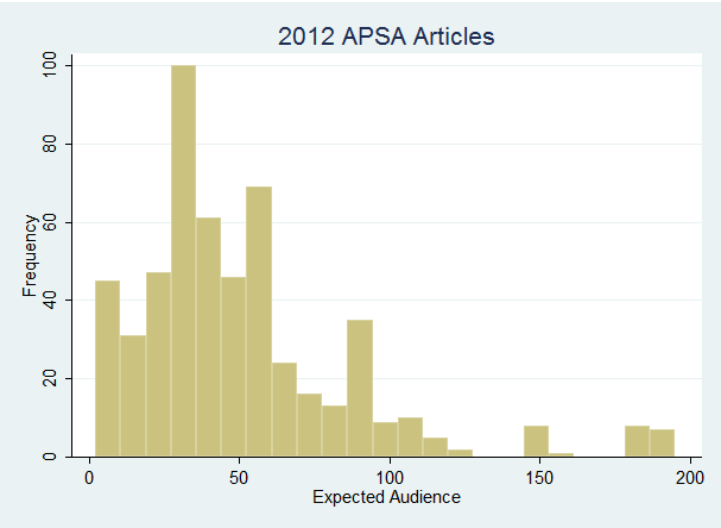


Table A1 - Descriptives: Articles' Characteristics and Outcomes

Sample:	All		in SSRN	
	APSA	MPSA	APSA	MPSA
	[1]	[2]	[3]	[4]
Characteristics				
Author is from a Top 10 Institution (in %)	12.94	8.48	9.59	15.88
	[33.57]	[27.87]	[29.46]	[36.72]
Author is from a]Top 10, Top 100] Institution (in %)	46.17	45.22	43.35	42.05
	[49.85]	[49.77]	[49.56]	[49.59]
Author is from a Institution below Top 100 (in %)	40.6	46.28	46.91	42.05
	[49.11]	[49.86]	[49.91]	[49.59]
Number of Authors	1.362	1.431	1.368	1.485
	[0.645]	[0.724]	[0.658]	[0.811]
Number of Days in SSRN			1122	1029
			[414.5]	[594.34]
Number of previous articles posted in SSRN			1.709	1.752
			[5.57]	[6.48]
N	12,055	3,569	2,695	107

Table A2- Heterogenous Effects: Effects of Conferences on Articles' views

		Author has a previous paper in SSRN		Author affiliation		
	All	Yes	No	Top 10	bellow Top 10 and within Top 100	bellow Top 100
	[1]	[2]	[3]	[4]	[5]	[6]
2012 x Expected Audience	**-0.2443**	**-0.07064**	**-0.5877**	**1.264**	**-0.3261**	**-0.6129**
	[0.2871]	**[0.2947]**	**[0.3951]**	**[0.5400]****	**[0.2450]**	**[0.4557]**
Expected Audience	0.2414	0.0266	0.4156	-0.7167	0.258	0.5329
	[0.2858]	[0.2416]	[0.4030]	[0.4731]	[0.1732]	[0.4341]
Controls						
Session theme fixed-effects (N=131)	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes
Author affiliation fixed effects (N=158)	no	yes	yes	no	no	no
Others	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes
R-square	0.1832	0.3187	0.2309	0.3076	0.207	0.2371
N	2,687	1,198	1,485	256	1,165	1,262

Notes: The sample includes only APSA articles. The dependent variable is the number of views by January 2014. The variable expected audience is explained in the text. Other controls include conference year fixed effects, number of days in SSRN, the square of the number of days in SSRN, number of authors, number of articles previously posted in SSRN by all article's authors and conference year minus earliest year an article was posted in SSRN by any of the article authors.

Robust standard errors clustered at the theme level are in brackets.

** Significant at the 5% level, * Significant at the 10% level

Table A3 - Diff-in-Diff Coefficient on Pre-determined Variables

Sample	APSA + MPSA articles		APSA articles	
Diff-in-diff Coefficient	APSA * 2012		APSA*2012* expected audience	
	[1]	[2]	[3]	[4]
Dependent variable				
Author affiliated to Top 10	-0.1307		0.0001	
	[0.0932]		[0.000387]	
Author affiliated between Top 11-50	0.1099		-0.0005	
	[0.0795]		[0.00051]	
Author affiliated between Top 51-100	-0.0393		-0.0010	
	[0.0941]		[0.0004]**	
Author affiliated bellow Top 100	0.0601		0.0014	
	[0.1122]		[0.0006]**	
Number of Authors	0.1238	0.1049	-0.0020	-0.0017
	[0.1662]	[0.17022]	[0.0007]**	[0.0007]**
Number of previous articles posted in SSRN	3.7932	4.3436	-0.0028	-0.0041
	[0.9433]**	[1.1788]**	[0.0044]	[0.0048]
Number of days the conference article has been in SSRN	-29.6108	-39.4053	-0.3640	-0.4790
	[88.234]	[87.9130]	[0.3266]	[0.3449]
Controls				
APSA dummy and year fixed effects	yes	yes	yes	yes
author affiliation fixed effects	no	yes	no	yes
N	2,781	2,781	2,686	2,686

** Significant at the 5% level, * Significant at the 10% level

Table A4- Heterogenous Effects: Effects of Conferences on Articles' citations

		Author has a previous paper in SSRN		Author affiliation		
	All	Yes	No	Top 10	bellow Top 10 and within Top 100	bellow Top 100
	[1]	[2]	[3]	[4]	[5]	[6]
2012 x Expected Audience	**-0.0001**	**-0.0004**	**-0.0003**	**0.0022**	**-0.0005**	**-0.0003**
	[0.0004]	**[0.0008]**	**[0.0004]**	**[0.0020]**	**[0.0006]**	**[0.0005]**
Expected Audience	-0.0004	-0.0009	0.0004	-0.0014	0.0002	0.0000
	[0.0003]	[0.0008]	[0.0003]	[0.0016]	[0.0005]	[0.0001]
Controls						
Session theme fixed-effects (N=131)	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes
Author affiliation fixed effects (N=158)	no	yes	yes	no	no	no
Others	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes
R-square	0.1217	0.194	0.1421	0.3299	0.1611	0.1149
N	2,687	1,198	1,485	256	1,165	1,262

Notes: The sample includes only APSA articles. The dependent variable is the number of SSRN citations by January 2014. The variable expected audience is explained in the text. Other controls include conference year fixed effects, number of days in SSRN, the square of the number of days in SSRN, number of authors, number of articles previously posted in SSRN by all article's authors and conference year minus earliest year an article was posted in SSRN by any of the article authors.

Robust standard errors clustered at the theme level are in brackets.

** Significant at the 5% level, * Significant at the 10% level