Moira Gidseg

Moira Gidseg | sites.google.com/view/moira-gidseg | mgidseg@arizona.edu
+1(626)235-3797 | 1130 E. Helen St. P.O. Box 210108, Tucson, AZ 85721-0108

Research Fields

Experimental Economics, Behavioral Economics

Education

University of Arizona — Tucson, AZ
Ph.D. Economics (M.A. 2022 en route) — Expected 2026
B.A. Philosophy, Politics, Economics, and Law — 2020
B.S. Ecology and Evolutionary Biology (with Honors) — 2020
Minor in Japanese

Working Papers

The Allures of Power (Job Market Paper, submitted to *Games and Economic Behavior*)

In this paper, I investigate the pursuit of "power" — the ability to determine the outcomes of others — along three dimensions: when people desire power, what people do with power, and who desires power. Using a lab experiment, I classify people into four mutually exclusive "power types" based on their behavior, and I find that these power types differ in how much they spend on power, which features of power they value, and the way they respond to changes in the price of controlling their partners' outcome. Crucially, I show that many subjects value power intrinsically.

A Bliss Point Model of Distributional Preferences

I propose and empirically evaluate a new "bliss point" model of social preferences, in which one's utility decreases in the distance between others' payoffs and a bliss point defined as a linear function of one's own payoff. Using new experimental data, I estimate individual-level parameters for this model and three alternatives (CES, inequality aversion, maximin), and then compare predictive accuracy. Preliminary results suggest that the bliss point model is the best predictor for 15–32% of subjects, depending on the task.

The Value of Choosing for Others

I propose and empirically evaluate a model of utility from "discretion" — the ability to influence others' outcomes. The model distinguishes between discretion to help versus harm, and assumes diminishing marginal utility. Using new experimental data, I estimate individual-level parameters from four social preference models, then assess how well the discretion model improves predictive accuracy compared to these models. Results forthcoming.

Publications

Gidseg, Moira (2020). "Investigation of the relationship between methuselah and stress granules in young *Drosophila melanogaster*". The University of Arizona. URL: https://repository.arizona.edu/handle/10150/662842.

> Stress granules are complexes of misfolded mRNA and protein which form when an organism is stressed and then dissolve afterwards. Connections between stress granule dynamics and genetic mutations which extend longevity have been found in several organisms. However, no studies have yet examined the relationship between stress granule dynamics and the longevity-increasing mutation *mth*^{1} (methuselah) in fruit flies. In this paper, I generate a line of flies containing both *mth*^{1} and *rin*-GFP (a gene which makes stress granules fluorescent). I then expose young flies both with and without the mutation to heat shock, which induces stress, so that I can compare stress granule formation in their brains. I find that the *mth*^{1}-*rin*-GFP flies formed larger stress granules than flies without the mutation, supporting the hypothesis that the *mth*^{1} mutation affects stress granule dynamics in early life. This makes further study of *mth*^{1} a promising avenue for understanding longevity.

Conference Presentations

"Modeling Preferences for Power Over Others," *2025 North American Meeting of the Economic Science Association*, Tucson, Arizona. October 2025.

"Modelling Preferences for Power Over Others," *2025 Asia-Pacific Meeting of the Economic Science Association in OSAKA*, Osaka, Japan. March 2025.

"The Allure of Power," *Conference in honor of Gary Charness*, Tucson, Arizona. January 2025. (Poster)

"The Allure of Power," *2024 North American Meeting of the Economic Science Association*, Columbus, Ohio. October 2024.

Professional Service

Organizing Committee, 2025 North American Meeting of the Economic Science Association

Teaching

Instructor of Record (responsible for entire course: lecturing, creating lecture materials, grading, homework, exams, office hours, etc.)
Behavioral Economics (ECON 436) — Summer 2025, Summer 2024
Microeconomic Analysis for Business Decisions (ECON 300, online) — Winter 2024

Teaching Assistant
Introduction to Experimental Economics (ECON 406) — Spring 2025, Spring 2024
Public Sector Economics (ECON 435) — Fall 2025, Spring 2025, Spring 2024
Law and Economics (ECON 338) — Fall 2023
Intermediate Microeconomics (ECON 361) — Spring 2023, Fall 2022, Fall 2021
Microeconomic Analysis for Business Decisions (ECON 300) — Fall 2025
Basic Economic Issues (ECON 200) — Spring 2023, Fall 2023, Spring 2022, Fall 2022
International Economics and Policy (ECON 340) — Fall 2024

Skills

Programming Languages/Specialist Software: Python, C#, Stata, ztree, Unity
Languages: English (native), Japanese (intermediate / CEFR B1 / JLPT N4-equivalent)

References

Charles Noussair
Eller Professor of Economics *(Ph.D. Advisor)*
Director, Economic Science Laboratory
University of Arizona
cnoussair@arizona.edu | +1(520)621-6229

Martin Dufwenberg
Distinguished Professor of Economics, Purdue University
Visiting Professor, University of Gothenburg
mdufwenb@purdue.edu

Inga Deimen
Associate Professor of Economics
University of Arizona
ideimen@arizona.edu | +1(520)621-6238

Price V. Fishback
Regents Professor
APS Professor of Economics
University of Arizona
fishback@arizona.edu | +1(520)621-4421

John Z. Drabicki
Vice Chair of Economics
Associate Professor of Economics
McCoy/Rogers Faculty Fellow
McClelland Fellow
University of Arizona
drabicki@arizona.edu | +1(520)621-4221