



IAST CONNECT #6

Spring/Summer 2015

INSTITUTE FOR ADVANCED STUDY IN TOULOUSE



DANIEL CHEN
HANDLING LARGE DATA SETS TO MEASURE BEHAVIOURAL ATTITUDES



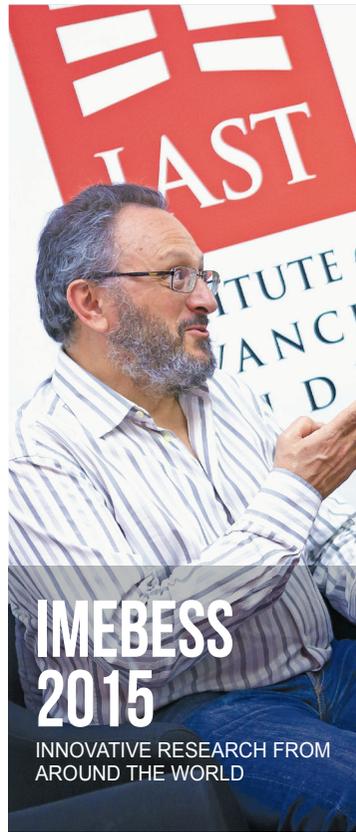
JONATHAN STIEGLITZ
STUDIES SMALL-SCALE SOCIETIES TO LEARN MORE ABOUT US



SOCIAL SCIENCE
WELCOME TO THE GOLDEN AGE!



SUCCESS STORY
JORDANNA MATLON GOES TO WASHINGTON



IMEBESS 2015
INNOVATIVE RESEARCH FROM AROUND THE WORLD



LET'S GET DIGITAL!
IAST LAUNCHES A NEW RESEARCH CHAIR

The IAST's bright yet challenging future

A VIEW FROM THE SCIENTIFIC COUNCIL

Dear readers, the IAST project is a unique undertaking. No other institution engages in social science research integrating scientists with backgrounds ranging from biology to history, economics and philosophy.

The Institute can already boast remarkable achievements, as recently emphasized by the IAST's Scientific Council midterm report. It has attracted highly reputed program directors and gifted researchers in nine disciplines. This concentration of talents has generated truly multidisciplinary projects, with a significant number of working papers combining analysis of economics, political economy and psychology. The next step is to integrate anthropology, sociology, biology, history and philosophy into the analytical framework. This issue has been addressed in the Scientific Council's 2015 report. Clearly, multidisciplinary research is a challenging undertaking and there is no 'best' way to encourage it.

The IAST will have to continue to be flexible and keep its founding principles in mind. We hope to facilitate risk-taking and innovation by reinforcing senior researchers' support for junior researchers. We also want to foster thought diversity, for example by increasing the faculty's international dimension. Another key target is to improve synergies, in particular via partnership with other institutions.

The IAST has come a long way in the past four years. We are excited to see how far it can reach.



GERARD HERTIG
 - IAST Scientific Council member
 - Professor of law, Swiss Federal Institute of Technology in Zurich (ETHZ)

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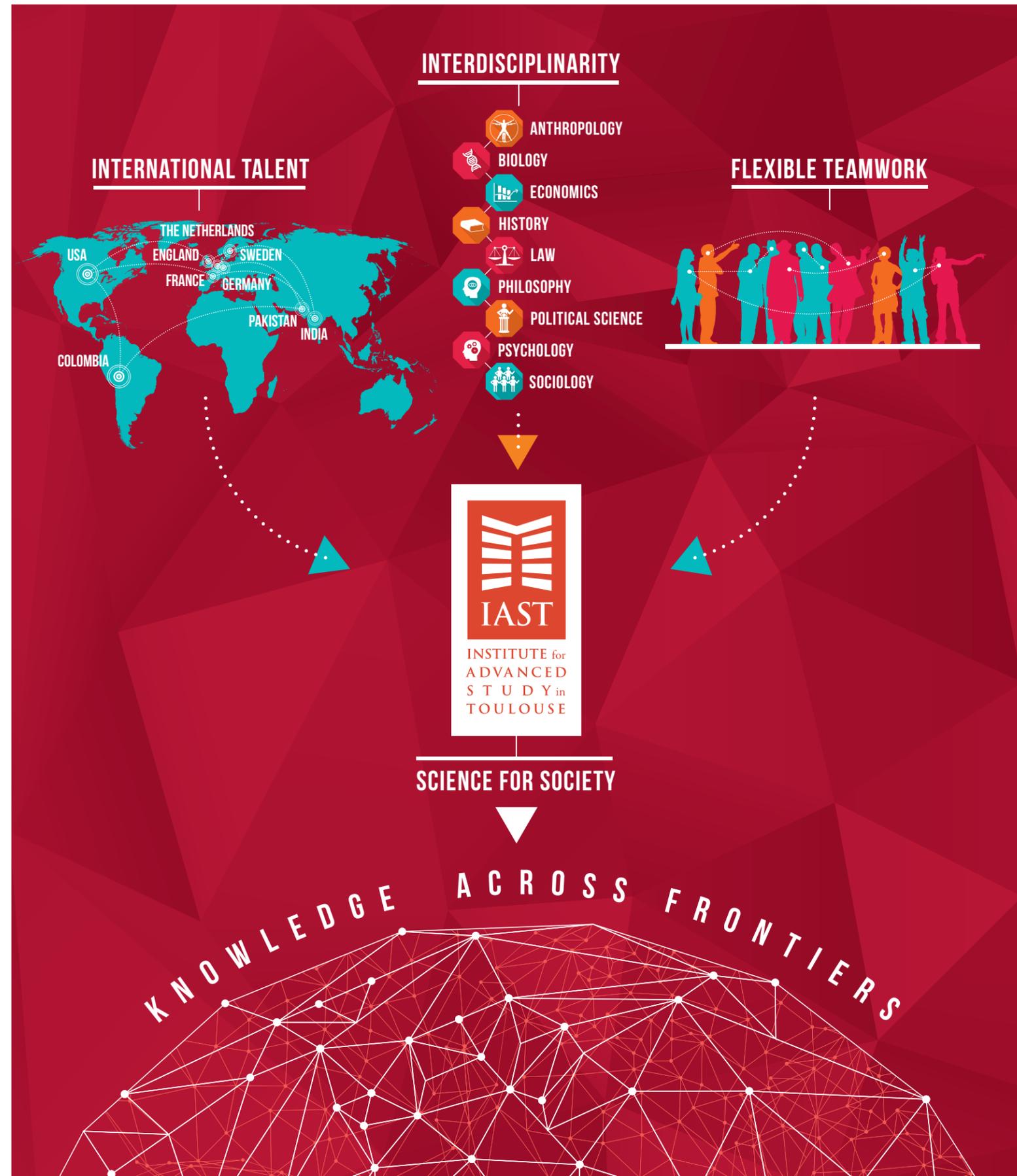
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IAST in action

FLASHBACK TO RECENT EVENTS



WORKSHOP ON TRADE AND HISTORY

MARCH 20, 2015

Within the regular workshop series organized by the IAST/Toulouse School of Economics economic history program, this event brought together scholars working on trade in a long historical perspective. The presentations included, among others, an article by Guy Michaels (LSE) and Ferdinand Rauch (Oxford) on the differential long-term effects of the collapse of the Western Roman Empire on urbanization in France and Britain. Walker Hanlon (UCLA) presented a paper on the effects on the labor market in Britain of the shock to textiles industry caused by the US Civil War. Dennis Novy (Warwick) talked about estimating asymmetries in trade costs using historical data on shipping. Finally, Mohamed Saleh (IAST history program director) presented an article on the effect of the Lancashire cotton famine in 1861-1865 on the emergence of agricultural slavery in cotton plantations in 19th-century rural Egypt. ■

WORKSHOP ON THE DIGITAL SINGLE MARKET IN EUROPE

MAY 5, 2015

This event was held in Brussels and jointly organized by the Jean-Jacques Laffont Chair on the Digital Economy (IAST & Toulouse School of Economics) and the Université Libre de Bruxelles. The agenda was twofold:

- to encourage a discussion and a convergence of minds on the analysis of the consequences of the digital single market and on the way in which it should be organized;
- to help the research community engage with the policy-making community to encourage more relevant research on the topics discussed. ■



WORKSHOP ON RELIGION, POLITICS AND DEVELOPMENT

MAY 19, 2015

According to the CIA's World Factbook roughly 9 individuals out of 10 are religious believers in some form, the non-religious and atheists representing just 9.7% and 2% of the world population respectively. Human beings hence have a widespread, though not universal, tendency to believe in the existence of invisible individuals, or "spirits", who

interact with us, in spite of the contradiction with the evidence of their senses. They undertake ritual practices whose purpose is based on the assumption that such invisible spirits exist and care about human life. These beliefs have deep consequences on economic outcomes. They affect our relations with fellow human beings. In some circumstances such beliefs enhance social trust and cooperation, and in others, they cause conflict. In this context, the May 19 workshop brought together leading scholars to present their work on the topic of religion and economics and hold an in-depth discussion on the forthcoming book by Jean-Philippe Platteau (Université de Namur), "Religion, Politics, and Development: Is Islam a Special Problem?" ■

CONFERENCE ON ELECTIONS: BEHAVIORS, INSTITUTIONS AND REFORMS

MARCH 26-27, 2015

Jointly organized by the IAST and Toulouse School of Economics (TSE), the second edition in a series on elections and democratic institutions brought together economists and political scientists to present and discuss the latest advances in this interdisciplinary field.

The ten presentations from international researchers combine a mix of methodological approaches - both formal analysis, empirical studies and experiments.

A special thanks goes out to James Snyder, Professor of History and Political Science at Harvard University, for his keynote opening lecture on "The Role of Primaries in the US Electoral System". Watch out for the third event in the series, scheduled for spring 2016. ■



IAST IN THE PRESS

WE MUST LEARN TO VALUE THE SOCIAL SCIENCES - LE MONDE

The scientific journal *Nature* earlier this year urged scientists to ask why they face public opposition to their theories, writes IAST director Paul Seabright in *Le Monde*, and called for the integration of approaches from the social sciences. Public skepticism arises not just in matters of medicine, evolution or climate science, but also in economics. The benefits of immigration, for example, are widely accepted by economists, but widely contested by the public. The reasons for this divide are unclear but the example suggests we should not judge the social sciences by the vagaries of public opinion.

THE PECKING ORDER OF SOCIABLE WEAVERS - SABC DOCUMENTARY

Investigating the fascinating nesting behavior of sociable weaver birds on location in the Kalahari, IAST researcher Arnaud Tognetti featured in South Africa Broadcasting Corporation's 50/50 TV documentary recently. The research team hope to draw valuable lessons about the dynamics of cooperation that may be common to all social organisms, including humans.



THE COMPLEX EQUATION FOR CHOOSING GENDER - LE MONDE

Recent discoveries about the genetic mechanisms for determining sex organs should give pause to those for whom sexual identity is reassuringly binary, writes IAST director Paul Seabright in *Le Monde*. Rather than resembling a process controlled by a simple switch, sexual identity results from a fragile compromise between two opposing armies of genes. The consequences for individuals born with ambiguous sex organs are often difficult. Can we imagine a future where gender is a private choice, like religion in a secular state?

WHY COMPANIES ARE ABANDONING SCIENCE

LE MONDE

Companies are investing less in basic scientific research, writes IAST director Paul Seabright in *Le Monde*, according to a recent study of US and European companies from 1980 to 2007. During the same period, R&D spending has nearly doubled. The authors conclude: "Companies seem to value the golden eggs as much as before, but they have stopped valuing the goose." One possible explanation is a greater focus by companies on core skills, as a result of increasing competition from Chinese imports.

HASHTAG ACTIVISM IS NOT IN THE HANDS OF EVERYONE

BBC NEWSHOUR

As #JeSuisCharlie was sweeping across Twitter, IAST researcher Jen Schradie told BBC Newshour that rather than digital activism having a "flattening effect", it is groups with the most organized, hierarchical structures that achieve the highest levels of participation. "We have this image of digital activists as left radical," she said, "but I've found the complete opposite. It's actually conservative, reformist groups that use the internet at much higher levels because they see it as a pipeline to power."



RESEARCH HIGHLIGHTS



TRUST

Samuele Centorrino, Elodie Djemaï, Astrid Hopfensitz, Manfred Milinski and Paul Seabright, "Honest signaling in trust interactions: smiles rated as genuine induce trust and signal higher earning opportunities", *Evolution and Human Behavior*, vol. 36, n. 1. doi:10.1016/j.evolhumbehav.2014.08.001.



POLITICAL BEHAVIOUR AND VOTING

Ted Brader, Dominik Duell and Joshua Tucker, "Which Parties Can Lead Opinion? Experimental Evidence on Partisan Cue Taking in Multiparty Democracies", *Comparative Political Studies*, vol. 46, n. 11, Sage. doi:10.1177/0010414012453452.



COORDINATION AND COOPERATION

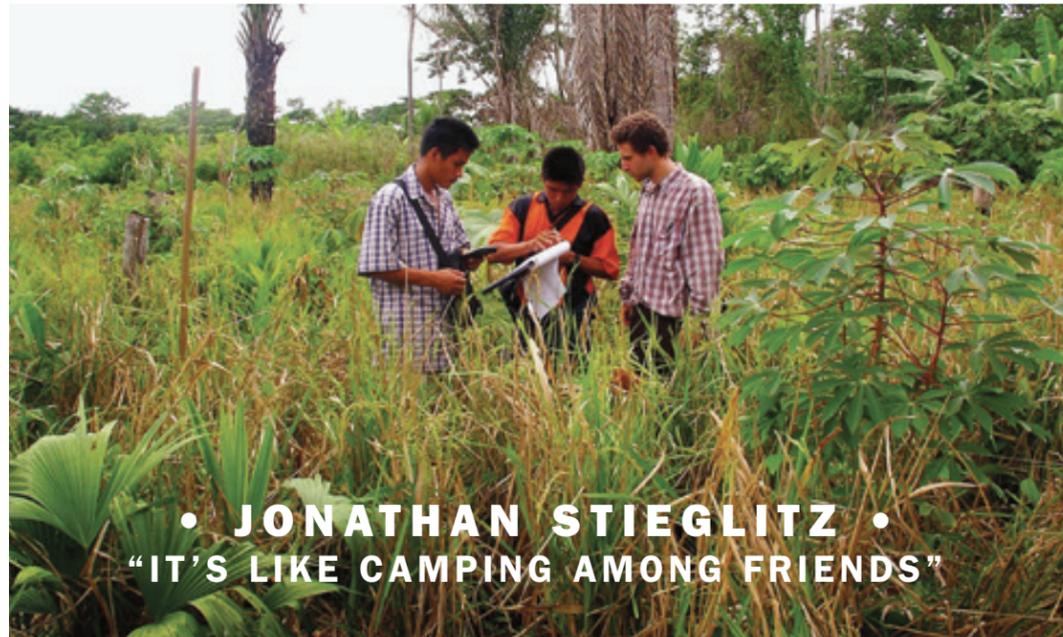
Abhijit Ramalingam, David Rojo Arjona, Arthur Schram and Boris Van Leeuwen, "Authority and Centrality: Power and Cooperation in Social Dilemma Networks", *IAST working paper*, n. 15-23.



RELIGION

Alissa MacMillan, "Exorcising Demons: Thomas Hobbes and Balthasar Bekker on Spirits and Religion", *Philosophica*, vol. 89.

Meet the IAST's latest recruits



• JONATHAN STIEGLITZ •
“IT'S LIKE CAMPING AMONG FRIENDS”

Jonathan Stieglitz is an evolutionary anthropologist from the University of New Mexico who began work as an IAST research fellow in January. He plans to work with IAST psychologists, biologists and economists to further his research in the Bolivian Amazon, where CT scans are among the cutting-edge techniques being used to ask what small-scale societies can tell us about the human condition.

It takes a genuine passion for research to spend 10 years visiting remote forager communities, putting up with gastro-intestinal parasites, diarrhea and the absence of modern amenities. Or to consider the prospect of fieldwork in war-ravaged central Africa. Jonathan Stieglitz, however, is just relieved he didn't have to pick up his dad's shovel.

“Everybody's an anthropologist. You don't need a PhD to be fascinated by human behavior, just look at the success of reality television. *Star magazine*, *The National Enquirer*, *Gossiping* - all of these things demonstrate that humans are very interested in each other. My father's an archaeologist, and I'd gone on digs and realized that it was just



Jonathan Stieglitz

torture, being in the hot sun all day with a shovel. Kudos to all of them, I could never do that. So that pushed me to studying modern humans as opposed to fossils.” It was

while studying anthropology at the University of New Mexico that Stieglitz met Hillard Kaplan, who is a long-term visitor at the IAST. Under Kaplan's tutelage, Stieglitz began spending long periods with the Tsimane people in the lowland forests and savannas of Bolivia. “They combine foraging, hunting and gathering with horticulture. They plant rice and corn using simple tools and ‘slash and burn’. It's a subsistence lifestyle and fertility is extremely high. There's no electricity. They drink water from the river or oxbow lakes. There's a very high infectious disease burden. People tend to live near their parents in villages of 50-500 people. Most of these characteristics were relatively common over human evolutionary history. We're not claiming they are perfectly analogous to our human ancestors, but they share a lot of socio-ecological features. This is the appeal of studying small-scale societies.” Arriving in Toulouse earlier this year, Stieglitz says the IAST offers a unique experience.



“The really fascinating and appealing thing about coming here was the explicitly interdisciplinary environment, the opportunity to work with psychologists, other evolutionary anthropologists, biologists and economists. I found out very quickly that there are big differences in methods and who we study, but we all use very similar principles and theories to approach and explain relatively similar questions.”

“A lot of Pygmy projects are led by French researchers, so it could be an interesting collaboration”

“Collaboration with IAST scholars has already led to innovative research ideas”, says Stieglitz, who will be returning to Bolivia this summer for two months. “I want to extend an economic game that's been done here by

Astrid Hopfensitz (IAST program director in psychology) and colleagues. She's looked at the extent to which husbands and wives agree on the allocation of resources within a family. The IAST is very strong in experimental economics, and anthropologists very rarely use experiments and economic games. So we want to utilize a modified version of Astrid's game in the field to look at variation within the Tsimane population but also to compare, say, Tsimane levels of cooperation with those of couples in Toulouse.” Stieglitz is also involved in a groundbreaking study ...

...

of cardiovascular and skeletal health. “We're taking adults over the age of 50 to a hospital for CT scans. The machine lets you look for plaques, which can restrict blood flow and cause heart attacks, and also we can look at skeletal structure. I'm beginning to work with researchers at Paul Sabatier University and Purpan Hospital, including José Braga, a physical anthropologist and Pascal Swider (biomechanics expert) and Marie Faruch Bilfeld (radiologist) who are very familiar with computer technology that lets you reconstruct things like bone mineral density. This is a technical collaboration, using existing data and state-of-the-art techniques. This has never been done in a foraging population.”

Becoming a father has understandably led to a reduction in field time. “Before I wouldn't bat an eye at going for six to eight months, whereas now even going for a few weeks I get tremendous guilt. I'd like to bring my family with me but my daughter's only three. The big concern is: what happens when you get a diarrheal disease or respiratory infection? We employ full-time physicians and laboratory technicians and we offer free healthcare to everyone in our study. This is a real strength of our project. But my wife doesn't buy it!”

“I tell her it's not that bad, it's like camping among friends. I've had the opportunity to develop very deep bonds and relationships. Of course you're bathing in the river so you get inundated with lots of stuff that wouldn't happen in Toulouse, so I've had gastro-intestinal parasites, diarrhea..., the works. In my early years, I would live very much like the Tsimane themselves. When you have more time you're able to immerse yourself in local norms. I would spend six months in one village, cooking with firewood and exchanging things for meat and plantains.”

Stieglitz says he would love to spend the rest of his life in France, but his days in the field appear far from over. One of the many reasons for coming to the IAST was the prospect of starting another field site. “We have talked about studying Pygmies in Africa. A lot of Pygmy projects are led by French researchers, so it could be an interesting collaboration. The problem is that there is lots of civil war in Congo and the Central African Republic, but we'll see where that goes.” ■



• DANIEL CHEN •
“I'M EXCITED TO BE HERE”

The IAST is the latest step in Daniel Chen's glittering academic career which has spanned some of the world's best universities, including Harvard, MIT, Duke, Chicago, Oxford and ETH Zurich, and earned him degrees in law, economics and applied mathematics.

You can't put a price on Daniel Chen. He's turned down lucrative offers from investment banks and big law firms. The White House Treasury tried to procure his services three times, promoting him even before he had answered. With his eye for detail and unusual research interests, this multi-talented visitor is sure to fit in perfectly at the IAST over the next 14 months. “There's a really strong group of economic theorists here and it's very interdisciplinary, so it's that milieu that draws me. I'm very excited to be here.”

Besides law and economics, Chen's research is infused by political science, sociology and history. It often involves what he calls “messy topics” and the painstaking accumulation of enormous data sets. For example, one of his projects involves curating data from more than 15 million court cases to study the effects of cognitive bias, elections, race, mood, time of day, weather and even sports results on the behaviour of US judges. “I'm interested normative commitments - what people think is the right or just thing to do - and how they spread and change in society. So that's obviously very relevant for how judges decide, or how people might respond to the law. We have data on this now that we didn't have five or six years ago. It's totally brand new, just the



D. Chen talk at ETH

data I've been collecting for the past two and a half years. It's about to take off.” Chen is also excited about his research on the death penalty. “During the First World War, the British

military sentenced 3,000 soldiers to death, usually for desertion. Historians believe that the decision to execute or commute a sentence was basically random. That's something I can statistically investigate. So does the death penalty deter? Do the Irish soldiers respond differently? This builds on the work of Jean Tirole and speaks to policy questions at a different level: when do people comply with the law and is it possible that harsh sanctions cause an adverse reaction?”

His experience in handling large data sets will be particularly beneficial to the IAST. “I'm also looking forward to conversations with experimental people at the IAST. I've been developing an experimental platform called OTree - it's open source and people can use this to run real-time experiments in the lab, online, or in the field via devices like tablets and smartphones. You don't need a lot of set up or all the computers to be networked. You can have people participating in, like, Toulouse and Kenya.”

Chen's fascination with measuring behavioral attitudes has a long history. His father, a Chinese-born statistician, set him impromptu statistics projects during high school summers. “I grew up in Texas and then Maryland. Then I had 11 years in Boston and I spent some time doing field experiments in Kenya. You'd ask the farmers, ‘Why don't you vaccinate your cow?’ and they'll say, ‘The cow's life is in God's hands.’ There'd be this really fatalistic attitude. What really jumps out is how people have very different views on what is the right thing to do.” ■



**FOLLOW OUR NEWCOMERS
ON YOUTUBE**



Let's get digital

IAST LAUNCHES NEW RESEARCH PROGRAM



FLEUR PELLERIN, FRENCH MINISTER OF CULTURE AND COMMUNICATION WITH JEAN TIROLE, IAST CHAIRMAN

Inspired by the work of Jean Tirole and other Toulouse economists, the French government has joined forces with the IAST, Toulouse School of Economics and leading global brands to create a new professorship that will address some of the biggest challenges of the 21st-century.

The IAST boldly assumed its place at the vanguard of the information age this year with the launch of a permanent research Chair on the digital economy. The announcement was made jointly on February 12 by IAST / TSE chairman Jean Tirole and Fleur Pellerin, French Minister of Culture and Communication. At the launch, the Minister said the chair would help France to spearhead new regulation and make Toulouse the European and international capital of digital and cultural research.

The chair, which is named after the late Toulouse economist Jean-Jacques Laffont, will receive a state-funded research budget of 750,000 euros over three years. It will also benefit from the support of private and public-sector sponsors including Accor, Samsung, Orange, Société Générale, the Caisse des Dépôts, the SACD and the SACEM.

IAST director Paul Seabright said that the launch was the product of a year-long consultation process with Minister Pellerin, formerly minister dedicated to the Digital Economy. "The project has accelerated since Jean Tirole won the Nobel Prize for Economics. His profile has been raised and this has allowed him to implement his ideas. We started from the observation that it has never been

"The chair will make Toulouse the European and international capital of digital and cultural research" - Fleur Pellerin, French Minister of Culture and Communication

easier to distribute not only creative content, but also management software on the internet. However, it has never been more difficult to be paid for this work.

Our goal is to bring together between 25 and 30 researchers. We want to attract the best talent in the world and so we will recruit three types of 'gray matter'. We're going to bring in senior and junior researchers to Toulouse. We will also have visitors and the chair has already partnered with a US researcher who works on health economics. Finally, a dozen researchers already present in Toulouse will bring their skills. We are not starting from zero since the Toulouse economists have already developed well-received theories of regulation, adopted by antitrust agencies and developed especially by Jean Tirole."

Each year the Chair will hold a high-level public meeting in Paris, inviting leading names in digital economy research. Regular workshops and conferences will also be held in Toulouse, Paris, Brussels and beyond.

Professor Tirole said that IAST involvement would help the Chair to maintain a holistic vision. "The digitalization of society is at the heart of the economic and social changes of the 21st-century. The launch of the Chair at a time ...

IT'S A BRAVE NEW ECONOMY

UNDERSTANDING THE IMPACT OF THE DIGITAL REVOLUTION

WHO CONTROLS THE WEB?

Regulation of the digital economy is one of the greatest challenges for governments



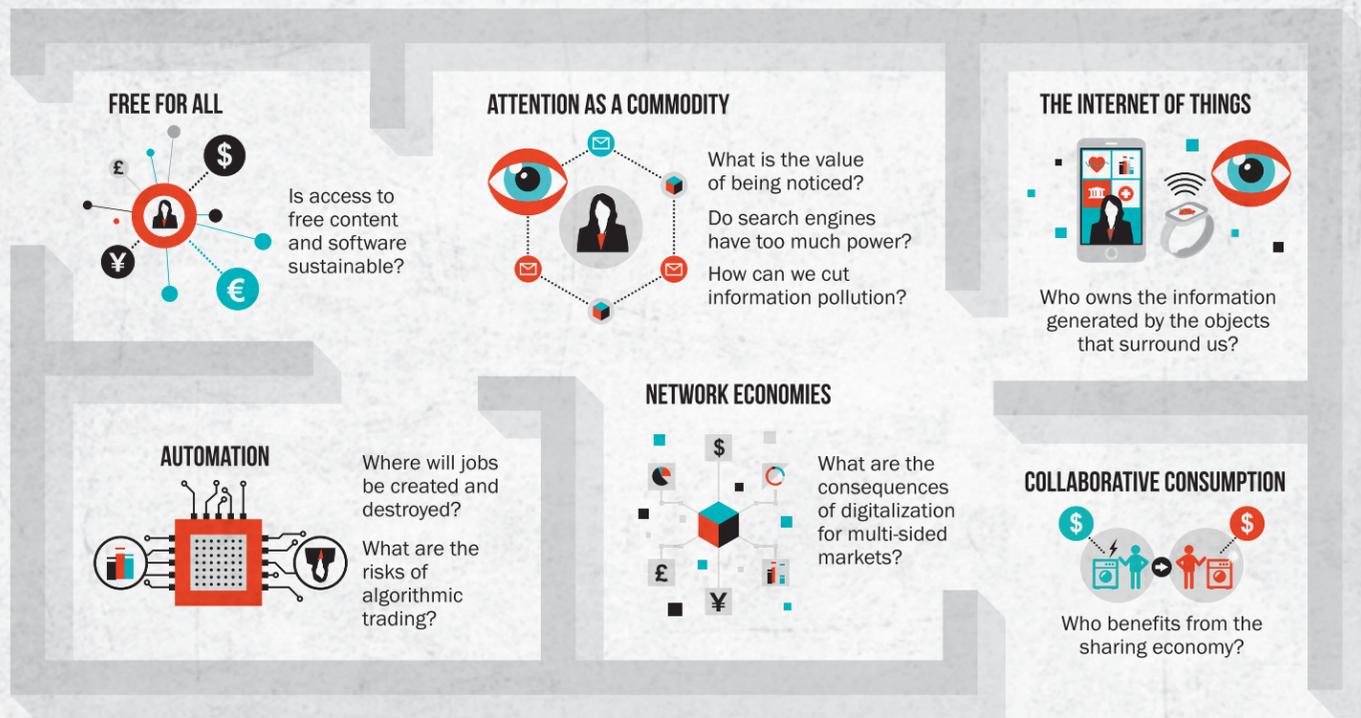
BUSINESSES LEAD THEIR SUPPORT TO THE CHAIR

- "Orange believes that the bonds between business and the academic world advance our knowledge and help to form future professionals who will know how to integrate the best of innovation to conceive the networks, products and services of tomorrow."
- "The research topics carried out by this Chair are also at the heart of the digital concerns of Société Générale: data protection, security and confidentiality in the Cloud and intellectual property rights in the digital economy."

- "Samsung calls for an open ecosystem and the creation of synergies between the actors of different markets to permit the internet of things to demonstrate its infinite possibilities."
- "Digitalization is a fundamental issue for tourism, the number one product distributed online in France and Europe, and particularly for Accor."
- The Caisse des dépôts group, the Société des auteurs et compositeurs dramatiques (SACD) and the Société des auteurs et compositeurs de musique enregistrée (SACEM) are also supporting the chair.

FINDING OUR WAY IN A LABYRINTH OF DATA

Our capacity to store, analyse and transmit data has grown exponentially since the turn of the century



... when the IAST has just got into its stride allows us to associate all the social sciences with the study of these developments. At the center of this work is the plethora of information that the digitization of content has made available. Fifty years ago, a reader was constrained by the number of books to which he had access. In the 21st-century, the problem is how to best use his time or attention. This attention economy fundamentally alters behavior and interactions and the combined insights of economists, psychologists and sociologists are needed to understand the proponents and outcomes."

Minister Pellerin echoed these concerns and said the project was born out of the need for regulation to keep up with the frenetic pace of digital developments. "We realized that 15 years after the launch of the internet in France, the web economy was structured around a few dominant players, who had set up strategies to avoid any tax at the global level, giving them a very strong competitive advantage over European players. That's why we turned to Jean Tirole, with whom we shared our questions about digital taxation, competition rights, territoriality of law, transfer of value, the economics of data and attention and the use of algorithms."



NEW RECRUIT!

The Digital Chair has already proved its ability to attract world-class talent with the recruitment of **Alexandre de Cornière** from the University of Oxford. De Cornière, who is currently a post-doctoral research fellow in economics at Nuffield College, will join Jean Tirole's team as TSE junior chair working on questions of platform competition and the internet. He earned his PhD at Paris School of Economics in 2012 and was winner of the EARIE Young Economist Essay Award in 2010.

Digitalization has also greatly upset the balance of cultural sectors, she said, especially with regard to fair remuneration of artists and authors: "We cannot accept that universal access to cultural works operates to the detriment of those who made them, or that the wide dissemination and sharing of culture should penalize those who make a living from it. We must support our citizens and enable them to distinguish works of quality among the multiplicity of online cultural output."

IMEBESS: a meeting of minds

Bringing together innovative research from around the world, IAST was privileged to host the 2015 International Meeting on Behavioral and Social Sciences (IMEBESS) this spring. IAST Connect talked to the organizers.

IAST was alive with discussion of the latest advances in experimental methods in April, as almost 100 social science researchers gathered in Toulouse. The International Meeting on Experimental and Behavioral Social Sciences (IMEBESS) gave academics from a diverse range of research traditions a chance to exchange ideas, debate their findings, and attend keynote speeches by pioneering scholars Colin Camerer, Cristina Bicchieri and Marie Claire Villeval.

It was only the second IMEBESS, but the meeting's success in attracting top-flight talent owes much to the pedigree of its predecessor, which toured in Spain over much of the past decade. The International Meeting on Experimental and Behavioral Economics (IMEBE) was a less ambitious project but organizers insist the current interdisciplinary spirit was noticeable from the start. "One of the local organizers at the first meeting, Fernando Aguiar, was a philosopher not an economist," said **Enrique Fatas**, Professor of Economics at the University of East Anglia. "We were genuinely interested in interdisciplinary research and talking to open-minded economists."

"It was really an entrepreneurial development," said **Jordi Brandts**, Research Professor at the Institute for Economic Analysis (CSIC) in Barcelona. "It's always been a very bottom-up thing. We started 11 years ago in Cordoba and because it was a success we just went on and on. We did it nine times in different Spanish cities." The growth in popularity of the meeting and the emigration of Spanish experimentalists led to thoughts of expansion.

"We didn't want to compete with the ESA [Economic Science Association] European meeting," said **Fatas**, "But we thought, maybe if we make it a little bit different, more interdisciplinary, we may move outside Spain."

"The interdisciplinarity which IMEBESS builds upon and reinforces has nothing to do with formulaic, hand-waving interdisciplinarity," said fellow organizer **Diego Gambetta**, Professor of Social Theory at the European University Institute. "The simplicity of design and the clarity of theory that, in order to succeed, experimental research demands of scholars makes it much easier to pursue fruitful links across disciplines. It promotes a high degree of analytical precision that travels well - across economic, social and psychological sciences, all the way to evolutionary biology - limiting misunderstandings and naturally highlighting points of common interest. Here we are all concerned with foundations of human behavior, and this is why I like it and will continue to support it."

After last year's meeting in Oxford, Nuffield College is due to become IMEBESS's institutional umbrella. "Nuffield and IAST represent very similar things to us. Now we have four people on our scientific committee," said **Fatas**, "us three, plus Ray Duch from Nuffield, and it is a nice combination of sociology, political science and economics."

The organizers were delighted with the quality of research and debate in Toulouse. "It's



JORDI BRANDTS AND ENRIQUE FATAS, IMEBESS ORGANIZERS

"We chose Toulouse because of this wonderful center. It exactly matches our spirit."

going very well," said **Fatas**. "There are some nice papers and I see plenty of interaction too. It's a fantastic venue, and the support of IAST is really appreciated. **Astrid Hopfensitz** (IAST program director) did a terrific job of putting it all together."

IMEBESS is set to broaden its scope still further. "We want to expand in maybe a more aggressive way," said **Fatas**. "We would like to attract more political scientists, psychologists and anthropologists. We'd be delighted to get historians and lawyers. The program reflects the offer of papers. It naturally mimics the evolution of research and interest in the behavioral academic community."

"In a way, hardcore economics topics are going down by themselves in this community," added **Brandts**. "Gender is a big thing now in economics that nobody worried about in the past. But we don't define the social sciences; we're open to all of them".

Enrique Fatas, Professor of Economics at the University of East Anglia and **Jordi Brandts**, Research Professor at the Institute for Economic Analysis (CSIC) in Barcelona

DISCIPLINES REPRESENTED AT THE EVENT



KEYNOTE INTERVIEW

Welcome to the **GOLDEN AGE** of social science

Research is at last breaking out of 20th-century academic apartheid, spurred on by the opportunities provided by big data analysis and unprecedented levels of communication between disciplines, NGOs, companies and governments. A new era is dawning, say Professors Colin Camerer, Cristina Bicchieri and Marie Claire Villeval, whose diverse interests in human behavior stretch across economics, psychology, philosophy and neuroscience. Invited to Toulouse as keynote speakers at this year's IMEBESS conference, these three high priests of multi-disciplinarity joined in a wide-ranging debate with IAST Connect to set out their vision for a brighter, interconnected future.

"Get out of the way!" snaps Professor **Colin Camerer**, when asked if he has a message for those who are unconvinced by his joined-up approach to solving problems. This affable neuroeconomist is bullish about the advances of social science and in a hurry to get to the answers. He is prepared to unlock the secrets of human behavior by any means necessary, whether that be fMRI brain scans, rigorous game-theory experiments or anthropological studies of corporate recruitment. Above all, he is irrepressibly eager to engage with others.

Ever since earning a degree in quantitative studies at the age of 17, **Camerer** has refused to be held in check by institutional barriers and preconceptions. "I think I always from university on was interested in more than one

thing. And putting different things together." Early on, Camerer was heavily influenced by the work of psychologists like Amos Tversky, Daniel Kahneman and Paul Slovic. "They were doing psychology in a way that, mathematically and in terms of data, you could see how it would integrate with economics, and that was the beginning of behavioral economics. At the University of Chicago business school they had a few psychologists teaching managerial judgment, and the MBA students got to hear about real people and their mistakes. It wasn't as interdisciplinary as things have gotten to be here at Toulouse [IAST] but there was a kind of coexistence of very different types of people. I also

25 years ago in France, interdisciplinary research was quite poor. Now it's completely different because disciplines communicate based on their own strengths and they respect each other.

wanted to talk about not just lab data but things that happen in the field, in the world, the institutions and inequality-things that are really important in people's lives."

Now Professor of Behavioral Finance and Economics at the California Institute of Technology, **Camerer** says the future of academic research is full of promise. In particular, the more creative use of the formal tools of economics and awareness of social context are vital ingredients in a rich new blend of behavioral and social sciences. "We are entering a golden age of social science because the degree of communication across fields is probably better than it's ever been. The open-mindedness in economics is better not just vis à vis, say, cognitive psychology, but also empirical ethics and moral emotions and social networks".

"It turns out you have to invent some new ideas. Economists like Matthew Jackson were looking for something new and exciting and they realized that social networks are really important, and not just in small-scale societies. When companies search for a new CEO, social networks are going to constrain who is going in those positions. So occasionally a combination of a construct and a tool that has lived in one discipline suddenly gets spread everywhere, a bit like global trade and ideas. For example, it used to be you could only get good bread and coffee in Europe, and now in the US, well, it's less awful than it used to be!"

Surfing this wave of enthusiasm for an interconnected approach, Professor **Marie Claire Villeval** is the research coordinator at the University of Lyon's Cortex, an ambitious project studying human cognition and behavior, from neurons to individuals. Like IAST, Cortex is also a Laboratory of Excellence. Speaking with an elegant cadence, her self-effacing tone seems well suited to running a team of diverse backgrounds and clashing egos. ...

...

Villeval began as a labor economist but, like **Camerer**, she was soon feeling constrained by the limits of orthodoxy. "I was a bit frustrated for two reasons. Firstly, it was not so easy 20, 25 years ago to get access to data, at least in France. The second was that I'd always been interested in exotic preferences. And in labor economics it was not very highly regarded. But I had the chance to meet people doing experiments and the first was Werner Güth, who invented and gave me the chance to play the ultimatum bargaining game. I started to understand that with very simple games we can express very powerful motivations. I saw the interest of running experiments and opening my mind to a different method. And the books by Colin in particular were very inspiring, showing that using the mathematical tools of economics you can communicate with other disciplines and everybody can bring something."



Mirroring Camerer's optimism about the arrival of a new golden age, **Villeval** insists that France is keeping pace with America. "Twenty or 25 years ago in France, interdisciplinary research was quite poor because it was frequently people who were not very good in economics meeting with people who were not very good in sociology or psychology. Now it's completely different because disciplines communicate based on their own strengths and they respect each other. We still publish in our field, but we have more opportunity than before to meet with others. We also have more incentives, more grants and more encouragement."

For **Villeval**, interdisciplinarity is like a public good game, an experiment in which subjects

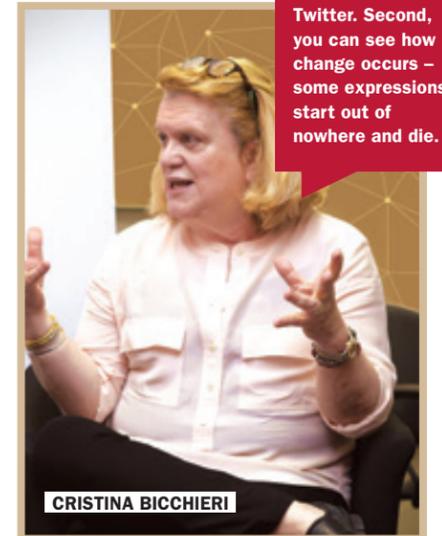
choose how many of their tokens to put into a public pot. "We need to bring what we can do, but our skills are not sufficient to explain a complex phenomenon. The more we know, the more we understand that our knowledge is very limited; so we need to interact with other people and we have more facilities today to do that. In France in particular we have these Laboratories of Excellence, IAST and also Cortex in Lyon, which give us the opportunity to communicate. I can learn from people working on stem cells or cognition and we realize that we may be talking about things that are complementary. It's not only between social sciences - we have pushed back the walls."

For **Camerer**, there are almost no limits to the potential of this eclectic approach. "If you think about developing new things and solving problems, it almost has to be interdisciplinary. Think about Aids. The doctors would say it's a medical problem, but if you're an African sociologist, it's not just a medical problem; it's a problem of truck drivers using prostitutes and contraception. And if politicians in South Africa say there's no such thing as Aids, there's a political propaganda piece of it. Or addiction is very similar. Or terrorism. When you start to think about practice, it forces you to be much less discipline-focused and you have to start to look for who has ideas."

Cristina Bicchieri, too, is eager to talk about practical benefits of the cross-fertilization of ideas. Despite not feeling well after a long journey to Toulouse, her conversation is animated and colorful. Professor of Social Thought and Comparative Ethics at the University of Pennsylvania (Penn), Bicchieri's interests lie in philosophy, psychology and game theory, but she has also served as a consultant to Unicef since 2008. She has advised the World Bank, the Gates Foundation and other aid organizations how to combat negative social practices such as female genital mutilation or child marriage.

"So, for example, why don't people use free condoms?" she asks. "Well, because sexual behavior is apparently a very private activity, but in reality it's a social activity in the

What is happening is amazing. First of all, you can identify a person's position in a network; there's a huge set of data on Twitter. Second, you can see how change occurs - some expressions start out of nowhere and die.



CRISTINA BICCHIERI

sense that you do what your peers do, you talk to them about that, etc. A typical intervention until a few years ago was 'Oh, let's give people information' or 'Let's go and inform them that if they do such and such a thing, they get Aids' or 'You should nurse your baby as soon as it's born.' Unfortunately, the mother-in-law, who dictates the roles, says no." Interventions often fail, says **Bicchieri**, because aid workers fail to appreciate the power of social norms and expectations.

To help policymakers encourage prosocial behavior, **Bicchieri** has been working not just with medical experts on global health, but also with experts in communication, replacing questionnaires with vignettes which are easier to understand. "People very often don't respond to hypothetical or counterfactual questions. Now there is a booming field of vignette making and they even do little movies to get telling answers. It has a huge impact on policies."

Combining an understanding of social motivations with medical know-how and creative communication can provide lasting solutions, **Bicchieri** contends, in contrast to short-term building projects. She cites the efforts of the Gates Foundation to combat open defecation. "Gates' interventions have failed miserably at building latrines. People used them as stables, to keep animals, food, etc. ...

COLIN CAMERER
AND MARIE CLAIRE VILLEVAL

...

The money was completely wasted. But there have been very successful interventions where emotions were used. They did something disgusting. They took all the shit and put it in the middle of the village, then put food around it, and told people, 'Sit and watch.' And they see flies going from one to the other and they start thinking, 'Oh, there is something wrong here.' The emotion of disgust is very powerful and it was a very strong motivator for people to change their behavior. You don't say to people, 'There are bacteria! What will they understand?'"

It's not just aid agencies that stand to benefit from a virtuous cycle of idea exchange, there is also increasingly fruitful cooperation between scholars, private companies and governments. "As academics," says **Villeval**,

"we have changed our point of view because before it was considered not that 'clean' to work for companies. The rest of the world has changed too. Companies are more open. I was surprised when interacting with them that they wanted to explore different methods. For example, we got in touch with public transportation companies who said, 'We have a problem: many people cheat.' And they don't understand why people cheat and to what extent, etc. They have done surveys but they realize it's not enough to understand the individual determinants. I wanted to do a field experiment and surprisingly they told me, 'No, we would like you to do lab experiments first. Then we'll go further together in the field and change things.' So it's also perhaps a golden age because it's easier for us to interact with companies, with governments, with NGOs."

Camerer agrees. "I think that's part of the golden age, that governments and companies that we used to think of as completely opaque, unhelpful institutions – like, 'Just give us money, please, and that's all we expect from you' – are much more proactive. Also, companies and governments don't care about your pedigree, they just care about who knows things that can help them solve problems and make progress. They're much more discipline blind than we are. We look at vitae and are like, 'Oh, you published in blank-blank-blank,' and they go to a meeting and it's just, 'Who has something interesting to say that we can understand?' It's helpful because it means that there is another clientele that doesn't value interdisciplinarity just for its own sake, and doesn't penalize it, but just wants people who can give answers." The golden age is



VITAE

Colin Camerer BA, Johns Hopkins University, 1976; MBA and PhD, University of Chicago, 1979 and 1981. He is Robert Kirby Professor of Behavioral Economics at California Institute of Technology. Prior affiliations include the University of Chicago, the University of Pennsylvania, and Northwestern University. He was named a MacArthur fellow in 2013.

Cristina Bicchieri Laurea, University of Milan, 1974; PhD, Cambridge University, 1984. She is SJP Harvie Professor of Social Thought and Comparative Ethics at the University of Pennsylvania. She was knighted Cavaliere Ordine al Merito della Repubblica Italiana. She previously taught at Barnard College and Columbia University, University of Notre Dame and Carnegie Mellon University. She is also a Unicef consultant.

Marie Claire Villeval BA, University of Nancy, 1978; MS and PhD, University Paris X Nanterre, 1979 and 1983; Habilitation, University of Lyon, 1996. She is director of GATE Institute at the University of Lyon and Research Professor at CNRS. She is founding president of the French Association of Experimental Economics (ASFEE). She is also Chevalier de l'Ordre National du Mérite.



also being fuelled by the increasing sophistication of tools that can process and analyze the huge data sets, often referred to as big data, made available by the advance of digital technologies. "The ability to do lab experiments has improved a little bit, but not that dramatically," says **Camerer**. "The dramatic increase has been with the web and so called 'lab in the field' experiments where you can go to many different locations, a lot of times collaborating with an NGO or government. The idea of companies doing experiments inside the company is a pretty modern, post-Silicon Valley phenomenon."

HOW TO REACH ACROSS DISCIPLINES

1 MOTIVATION

There's no substitute for curiosity. "It takes individual scientists who are good at what they do, but who are genuinely curious about other people, and then it takes time and a regular schedule," says **Colin Camerer**. "That's why an institute or a particular grant is often a really good vehicle. First, the people you want have to want to do it - you can't buy the intrinsic motivation. Then money, space and other rewards can catalyze things."



2 CONSENSUS

Terminology is often a hindrance. "It takes time to learn each other's language," says **Camerer**. "One problem is you use different words, like 'I don't know what you mean by epigenetic'. The second problem is you use the same word, like 'rational', and then you really get confused! Trust is another thing that social sciences think about in different ways. We can come to a consensus. It may be that takes ages or you end up deciding that there's different flavors of things that we want to have different names for."



3 COURAGE

Branching out across disciplines is not without dangers for less established academics. "The organizational structure of university departments still ends up constraining, along with the institution of tenure, what people can and cannot do," says **Camerer**. "The labor market for academic talent is lagging behind. The three of us have all succeeded in one way or the other. But for others there's a bit of professional risk."



4 LISTENING

An open-minded approach is essential, **Camerer** insists. "If you start too confrontational, like 'my field's better than your field...' ('Disaster!') interjects **Cristina Bicchieri**. "Every field has things that are valuable but you need a certain amount of humility. You have to oscillate between being a patient teacher and an obedient student. The right model is to work in teams – then it's project management that becomes the constraint."



"Companies and governments don't care about your pedigree, they just care about who can help them solve problems. They're much more discipline blind than we are" - Colin Camerer

of various areas: linguistics, an evolutionary model, network analysis, big data and how to deal with it. This is exactly the kind of integration we need. This is the typical example of research which is super interdisciplinary, where there is one problem, but with many facets, and different people can contribute. This is the idea. This is the golden age of social science: the fact that we zero in on problems more than disciplines". ■

IMEBESS FOCUS

Cheats, liars and bribes

Haunted by thoughts of deceit and corruption, Shakespeare's Hamlet is obsessed with "this canker of our nature". Of course, it's not just in 16th-century Denmark that something is rotten. From bribery, trafficking of influences, extortion, embezzlement, counterfeiting, to collusion and conspiracy, corruption infects all countries. Drawing on some of the latest research by experimental and behavioral social scientists, the IAST hosted a fascinating session on the subject at the 2015 IMEBESS Conference.

The idea that honesty can bolster economic development is not a recent one. Speaking at the IMEBESS Conference, David Hugh-Jones cited 19th-century Chinese scholar Feng Guifen, who attributed the success of the British Empire to four causes: utilizing manpower, superior agriculture, control over rulers, and "the necessary accord of word with deed". To explore the idea that honesty may vary across different cultures, Hugh-Jones conducted an incentivized online experiment involving 800 participants from around the world, who were asked to flip a coin, complete a test and report the results. The results showed surprisingly high levels of dishonesty among the Chinese participants, and Hugh-Jones is

keen to follow up his findings with further studies in South-east Asia. Whistle-blowing on corruption also appears to vary across cultures, according to experiments conducted by Nan Zhang. His research examines how the propensity to report corruption differs between northern and southern Italians, two groups that experience very different levels of corruption. The results suggest that the experience of corruption shapes the willingness to engage in anti-corruption monitoring, depending on the quality of enforcement institutions.

"A fish rots from the head" is a proverb that crops up in many parts of the world, but Oege Dijk's research suggests that the flow of corruption is not necessarily a top-down process: "One of the reasons that corruption is endemic in many countries is that a corrupt official can bribe their supervisor to escape any charges. If in turn this supervisor is caught for taking bribes, they can simply bribe their superintendent. When all officials and supervisors are rational and corruptible, nobody ever gets caught: corruption simply cascades upwards. Increasing the penalty or likelihood of being caught does not lessen corruption but simply alters the distribution of income along the bribe chain."

For most economists, the root causes of corruption lie in the delegation of power. Corruption is

modelled as criminal behavior by agents, such as the police or financial advisors, entrusted to act on the behalf of principals, such as taxpayers or shareholders. According to this view, corruption could be avoided by fixing the incentive structure or the institutional setting.

This idea is supported by both Oege Dijk and Vera Angelova, who have conducted experiments which suggest that using bonuses could help reduce corruption. Angelova's paper analyzes the relationship between financial advisors and clients, and finds that the highest rates of honesty are achieved when experts are encouraged by a combination of three factors: the possibility of gaining a good reputation, competition and bonuses.

IMEBESS PANEL ON HONESTY AND CORRUPTION

Vera Angelova, Technische Universität Berlin
Honest Advisors? The Role of Competition, Reputation, and Reciprocity

Oege Dijk, Radboud University Nijmegen
Corruption Cascades

David Hugh-Jones, University of East Anglia
The Necessary Accord of Word with Deed: Honesty Across Eight Countries

Nan Zhang, EUI Institutions
Culture and Blowing the Whistle on Corruption: An Experiment with Northern and Southern Italians

CORRUPTION PERCEPTIONS INDEX 2014



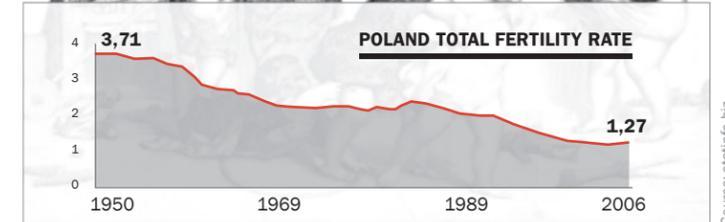
COUNTRY CONTRAST



The fruits of declining fertility

WOMEN, WEALTH AND STATUS IN RURAL POLAND

As subsistence farming communities around the world have become integrated in a market economy, fertility has tended to decline. Working with data from rural Poland, the IAST's Heidi Colleran has carried out groundbreaking research into this crucial moment of demographic transition. Her results provide a rarely available insight into the changing dynamics of wealth, status and inequality in one of the few European regions where this change is still ongoing.



IAST researcher Heidi Colleran finds fertility decline to be associated with declining inequality in wealth and market integration...

In subsistence farming populations, wealthy and high-status people typically have high fertility. In transitioning and market economy populations, wealthy and high-status people typically have lower fertility and wealth inequality is temporarily reduced. Despite extensive research on the subject, there is little agreement about how these two broad reversals occur, or how they may be connected.

More detailed comparative studies are needed in transitioning populations, where both 'traditional' and 'modern' forms of wealth and status influence fertility. Colleran and her team seek to redress the balance: "Few studies have compared wealth and status effects on fertility in multiple local contexts. Fewer still have examined how interactions between different measures may produce context-dependent reproductive outcomes. Moreover, little is known about how inequality varies on the continuum of economic modernization, or indeed, how inequality relates to fertility in mid-transitional contexts."

Colleran's data come from an anthropological-demographic study of nearly 2,000 women living in rural communities. The area is characterized by centuries of peasant subsistence farming but is now rapidly becoming dependent on labor-market income, following



Poland's transition to a market economy in the early 1990s and accession to the EU in 2004. Fertility in the area, while still high, is declining. Family sizes average around four children, despite Poland having one of the lowest fertility rates in the world.

In this mid-transition context, Colleran finds wealth and status generally have opposing effects on fertility, and that they interact: wealthy women with higher levels of educational capital have fewer children, whereas wealthy women with lower educational capital have more children.

This decoupling of wealth and status allows variation in reproductive strategies to emerge alongside new forms of status stratification. Couples abandoning farming for market-oriented employment receive an economic and a demographic dividend. Non-farming income is increased, permitting investments in educational capital, savings and other assets. And with declining demand for children as economic contributors, resources are diluted among fewer people.

Colleran finds fertility decline to be associated with declining inequality in wealth and market integration, but not with declining inequality

in educational capital. "Our analyses support the assumption that more equality in market integration is related to the accumulation of educational capital. So why was inequality in educational capital unimportant for predicting fertility decline? The answer lies partly in the fact that market engagement in this population is not dependent on high levels of education, as informal and migrant wage-labor, and to a lesser extent, seasonal cash cropping, can generate significant financial returns for less-educated households. This explains why women with the highest educational capital, while more market integrated, were not necessarily wealthier."

Colleran's results capture reproductive stratification alongside new kinds of status stratification. She expects similar interactions to exist in other transitioning populations, and urges more cross-cultural work to establish whether they are a general feature of socio-economic stratification.

Fertility decline and the changing dynamics of wealth, status and inequality
Heidi Colleran, Grazyna Jasienska, Ilona Nenko, Andrzej Galbarczyk and Ruth Mace

Jordanna's journey

NEXT STOP, AMERICAN UNIVERSITY WASHINGTON!

Jordanna Matlon is a sociologist with a special interest in questions of race, identity and exclusion, particularly for members of the African diaspora. Jordanna was one of the very first IAST "rookies", joining the Institute as research fellow in 2012 just after its creation. Three years down the line and many exciting IAST experiences later, Jordanna is now preparing the next leg of her marvelous adventure: a move to Washington to take up a new interdisciplinary position at American University. IAST Connect caught up with Jordanna to find out more.

Jordanna, tell us about your new job

I'll be moving this summer for a new position as Assistant Professor of Global Urban Studies at American University's School of International Service (SIS), a department aimed towards international, interdisciplinary scholarship. The school is fantastic - consistently ranked in the top 10 of international relations programs both in the United States and internationally. Although I tend to be theory-oriented, SIS has more of a policy orientation, so my hire is an expression of the school's interest in diversifying its faculty. Moreover, by 2030 American U aims to become a leader in metropolitan studies, and I heard there was good support for creating a position in Global Urban Studies.

As well as working on my research, I will also teach a range of undergrad, masters and PhD courses. In my first year I will teach *The Postcolonial City and Visuality in Africa*. Of all the schools I interviewed with, I was most excited about SIS - faculty are incredibly involved in "real world" issues, advising governments, writing policies, and publishing regularly in high-profile newspapers. And it was apparent during the Q&A that there I had potential colleagues who were by far the most informed about my research, so it feels very much "at home".



Jordanna's research investigates the livelihoods and lifestyles of men in the urban informal economy of Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire.



...

This is a great success story for the IAST. How has your time here helped you towards this new challenge?

My three years at the IAST have been the perfect preparation for this new move. I am a sociologist, but SIS is an interdisciplinary department with key strengths in political science. The past three years I have been practicing the art of translating my research across disciplines, and learning about other methods of inquiry and theoretical paradigms. I'm sure this showed when I interviewed, and will come of great use as I begin my new job.

More generally, the IAST has been a fantastic opportunity to spend this crucial early period of my career wholly focused on my writing, which resulted in numerous publications and hence a competitive CV. Add to that the benefits of Toulouse, which is a beautiful city full of cultural offerings and great food, and Europe more generally, where I have had the chance to become acquainted with academic traditions outside of the U.S. This will serve me well at a school that focuses on the international, and I hope it will also reflect positively in my research. And I've had fun! I travel outside of France frequently and wouldn't have traded this experience for anything. I am of course delighted about moving

to Washington, DC, but I will be sad to leave Toulouse and the wonderful people at the IAST. I have made friends and colleagues for life here.

Could you tell us more about your ongoing and upcoming research projects?

My research investigates the livelihoods and lifestyles of men in the urban informal economy of Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire, with particular attention to the relationship between marginal black men and identity construction in Africa and the African diaspora. I employ qualitative methods: ethnography, interviews, and visual analysis. Drawing on my dissertation, I am currently preparing my book manuscript, *'I will be VIP!': Masculinity, modernity, and crisis on the neoliberal periphery*. In it I interrogate how urban informality is a key manifestation of the "feminization of work" and its relationship to normative masculine identity.

Additionally, I am in the early stages of an ethnographic film project on bus drivers and bus art in Abidjan, tentatively titled *This is how we roll: Black men's visibility and the status economies of bus portraiture on the African urban periphery*. It will constitute the first half of my next book project comparing high-status jobs in the informal and formal sectors. ■

JORDANNA'S LIFE BEYOND BORDERS

- ▶ early 1980s, Ouagadougou¹, **Burkina Faso**
- ▶ mid 1980s, Hyderabad², **India** and **northern California**³
- ▶ late 1980s, Bouaké⁴, **Côte d'Ivoire**
- ▶ 1989 - 1997, Saint Paul⁵, **Minnesota**
- ▶ 1997 - 2002, **New York City**⁶ - Columbia University, and Melbourne⁷, **Australia** - University of Melbourne study abroad
- ▶ 2002, Derby⁸, **UK** - Projects Assistant, urban regeneration agency
- ▶ 2003, Xi'an⁹, **China** - English teacher, Shaanxi Medical College
- ▶ 2004, Cochabamba¹⁰, **Bolivia** - high school teacher
- ▶ 2004 - 2012, UC Berkeley¹¹ MA and PhD, research in Abidjan¹², **Côte d'Ivoire** (2008-2009), and dissertation writing in Xalapa¹³, **Mexico** (2010-2011)
- ▶ 2012 - present, IAST¹⁴, **France**, and Cape Town¹⁵, **South Africa**
- ▶ 2015 - American University¹⁶, **Washington, DC**

FIND OUT MORE jordannamatlon.com

DATES FOR THE DIARY

June 4-5

Workshop on "Economics and Biology: Evolution and Morality" Toulouse

June 15

Workshop on "Political Economy" Toulouse

June 22-23

Workshop on "Self-deception, Self-signaling, and Self-control" Toulouse

June 26

Outreach forum for the Jean-Jacques Laffont Digital chair Quai Branly Museum, Paris



APPLY NOW

June 27

Application deadline for the 2015-16 IAST/TSE-WZB "Research in Pairs" program





Distinguished Lectures in the Social Sciences

The Institute for Advanced Study in Toulouse continues its special public lecture series, the IAST Distinguished Lectures in the Social Sciences, given by internationally renowned scholars on a theme of interest to all concerned citizens.

THEME FOR 2015: THE HUMAN FAMILY



Public lectures open to all



► **September 24, 2015:**
Svante Pääbo
Max Planck Institute for Evolutionary Anthropology, Leipzig
"Our evolutionary lineage"



► **November 5, 2015**
Janet Currie
Princeton University
"The influence of families on the life outcomes of children"



► **December 3, 2015**
Emmanuel Todd
INED Paris
"Globalization and the changing nature of families"
(this lecture will be in French)

Venue: **Amphitheater CUJAS at the Toulouse 1 Capitole University**
Address: **Anciennes Facultés, 2 rue des Puits-Creusés, 31000 Toulouse**

Time:
18:00 to
20:00

www.iast.fr/dl



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