

ERIC MELANDER

Updated: December 2018

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EDUCATION

- 2015 - present *Ph.D. Economics, University of Warwick*
Research interests: applied microeconometrics, economic history, political economy
Supervisor: Sascha O. Becker
Expected submission: 2019
- 2013 - 2015 *M.Res. Economics, with Distinction, University of Warwick*
- 2010 - 2013 *B.Sc. Economics and Economic History, First Class Honours, University of Warwick*

RESEARCH

- Job market paper **Mobility and Mobilisation: Railways and the Spread of Social Movements**
- Working papers **Creating ‘Us and Them’: Racial Propaganda, Insularity and Right-Wing Ideology**

Warfare, Local Political Institutions, and Fiscal Capacity: Evidence from Six Centuries of German History
with Sascha O. Becker, Andreas Ferrara and Luigi Pascali
- Work in progress **Poor Relief and Crime: Evidence from the New Poor Law**
with Martina Miotto

OTHER RESEARCH EXPERIENCE

- 2014 - 2016 *Research assistant for Sascha O. Becker and Luigi Pascali*
- 2014 *ifo Centre for the Economics of Education and Innovation, University of Munich*
Research internship supervised by Francesco Cinnirella, Oliver Falck and Simon Wiederhold

PRESENTATIONS (INCLUDING SCHEDULED)

- 2019 Economic History Society Annual Conference (**Queen’s University Belfast**)
- 2018 Leicester Ph.D. Conference (**Leicester**), RES Symposium of Junior Researchers (**Sussex**), CAGE AMES Seminar (**Warwick**), Warwick Ph.D. Conference (poster, **Warwick**), Annual Workshop on Growth, History and Development (**Southern Denmark**), ASREC Europe Conference (**Luxembourg**), EBE Summer Meeting (**Munich**), World Economic History Congress (**Boston**), Sound Economic History Workshop (**Gothenburg**), Workshop on Urban, Regional and International Economics (**Southern Denmark**), Oxford-Warwick-LSE Economic History Workshop (**Warwick**), Graduate Seminar in Economic History (**London School of Economics**), Workshop on Political Economy (**ifo Dresden**), Workshop on Interwar Economic History (**London School of Economics**), RES Ph.D. Meeting (**Westminster Business School**)

2017 CAGE Research Day (**Warwick**), Spring Meeting of Young Economists (**Halle/Saale**), Young Economists' Meeting (**Brno**), CAGE-EHES-IAS Summer School (**Warwick**), ASREC Europe Conference (**Bologna**), Annual Meeting of the Danish Society for Economic and Social History (**Copenhagen Business School**)

TEACHING EXPERIENCE

2015 - present *EC123 Mathematical Techniques B (undergraduate)*, University of Warwick
Average student evaluation: 4.51/5 (2015), 4.52/5 (2016), 4.68/5 (2017)
EC124 Statistical Techniques B (undergraduate), University of Warwick
Average student evaluation: 4.33/5 (2016), 4.56/5 (2017), 4.43/5 (2018)

DEPARTMENTAL RESPONSIBILITIES

2016 - present CAGE AMES seminar series co-organiser
2015 - 2017 Warwick Ph.D. Conference co-organiser
2013 - 2014 M.Res. student-staff liaison representative

SKILLS AND FURTHER QUALIFICATIONS

Languages English (fluent), Swedish (native), German (fluent), French (basic)
IT Proficiency: Office, L^AT_EX, Stata, ArcGIS
Familiarity: R, Python

AWARDS AND SCHOLARSHIPS

2017 Best Paper Award – Young Economists' Meeting (Brno)
2015 – 2018 CAGE ESRC DTC studentship
2013 – 2015 M.Res. departmental studentship
2012 Greenlite Prize 2012 for best performance in Economics and Economic History

REFERENCES

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Jeremy Smith (teaching)
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Mobility and Mobilisation: Railways and the Spread of Social Movements

Job Market Paper

How do reductions in interaction costs shape the diffusion of social movements? In this paper, I use a natural experiment from Swedish history to answer this question. During the thirty-year period 1881-1910, Swedish society underwent two transformative developments: the large-scale roll-out of a national railway network and the nascence of social movements which came to dominate social and political spheres well into the twentieth century. Using event-study and instrumental variables methodologies, I document the causal impact of proximity to the newly constructed railway network on the spread and growth of membership in these social movements. Well-connected municipalities were more likely to host a local movement organisation, and saw more rapid growth of membership per capita. The movement of individuals is key: results are driven by passenger arrivals into connected municipalities, not freight arrivals. I implement a market access framework to uncover the mechanisms underlying this result: by reducing least-cost distances between municipalities, railways intensified the influence exerted by neighbouring concentrations of membership, thereby enabling social contagion. I explore the interrelationships between movement types, and show that railway access reduced levels of strategic substitutability between different groups.

Creating ‘Us and Them’: Racial Propaganda, Insularity and Right-Wing Ideology

What determines the efficacy of identity-based propaganda, and how long-lasting are its effects? To shed light on these questions, I study the impact of the Swedish *State Institute for Race Biology’s* popularisation of race biology on right-wing ideology in the short and long run. In a popular book edition of its systematic classification of the Swedish population according to “Nordic purity”, the *Institute* identified particularly “pure” areas of the country. Implementing a differences-in-differences strategy, I document the effect of the publication on right-wing ideology: following the publication, election districts of above-median “Swedishness” exhibit a 3.4 percentage point relative increase in the vote share of right-wing parties. This effect is concentrated in areas with little immigration, suggesting that insular communities may be particularly susceptible to this type of racial rhetoric. Using data on library funding as a proxy for the accessibility of the book, I show that districts with good access drive the results. Media is critical in propagating the effect: the “Swedishness” effect is present only in regions with high levels of exposure to race-biological news media. I corroborate my findings with data on the complete incoming correspondence of the *Institute*, showing that above-median “Swedish” regions become more directly involved with the *Institute* after the publication of the book. Finally, the rightward turn appears to persist over time: present-day municipalities in formerly above-median “Swedish” regions exhibit a higher relative vote share for the Sweden Democrats, a populist party with roots in the extreme right.

Warfare, Local Political Institutions, and Fiscal Capacity: Evidence from Six Centuries of German History

with Sascha O. Becker, Andreas Ferrara and Luigi Pascale

In this paper, we study the effect of warfare on the development of state capacity and representative political institutions using novel data on cities and territories in the German lands between 1200 and 1750. Using changes to German nobles’ positions within the European nobility network to instrument for conflict, we find that cities with a higher conflict exposure develop more sophisticated tax systems. Additionally, councils in cities exposed to conflict are larger, more likely to be elected by citizens, and more likely to be independent of other local institutions. These results suggest that periods of warfare sharpen rulers’ trade-offs between political power and their ability to tax.