

Carroll Round XVIII

I would like to thank my dissertation tutor, Federico Lampis, and module leader Gianna Boero for encouraging me to apply for the Carroll Round conference. I would definitely recommend people to apply to the Carroll Round; it was a great way to get exposure to different types of research in Economics. The conference is also an amazing opportunity to get feedback from fellow participants during the Q&A and discussion session following your paper presentation.

Thursday

I arrived at Dulles International airport in the late afternoon and headed straight to the Georgetown University hotel and conference centre. Upon arrival, I was introduced to my roommate and we were given our conference packs with the timetables and presentation schedule. We then split up into smaller groups and walked around Georgetown to find a restaurant for dinner. It was really great meeting students from a wide range of universities, not only from the US and UK, but also from Dubai, South America and Belarus.

After dinner, we went back to the conference centre for an introduction session where we were introduced to the Carroll Round Steering Committee and Dean Mitch Kaneda, the faculty advisor for the conference. He explained the foundation of the Carroll Round back in 2001 and its philosophy to bring together like-minded students to discuss Economics research beyond their degrees.

Friday

On Friday, the first day of presentations was held. We met at the hotel lobby and headed down to Healy Hall for breakfast. For the morning session, I attended the paper presentations on the impact of state-run lotteries on inequality, global allocative efficiency and the role of subjective information in whitepapers on ICOs. I was surprised by the wide range of topics and empirical tools used, which is really helpful for ideas for further independent research in terms of creating/collecting data as well as analysing it. I was particularly impressed with theoretical papers which were structured around the formulation of new economic models rather than just empirical analysis. After the first session, we all headed for lunch at a Thai restaurant. This was then followed by the afternoon sessions, where I learnt about the corruption-inequality trap, the effects of natural disasters on elections and the role of electoral fairness on voting behaviour.

Friday's social involved a cocktail dinner at 1789. During the dinner, we were given a presentation on the impacts of public policy in context of behavioural biases by the keynote speaker Hunt Allcott. I especially enjoyed the talk as it was a great insight into behavioural public policy and welfare, away from the more traditional and abstract fields of Economics.

Saturday

Saturday consisted of the second day of presentations, again held at Healy Hall. For the morning session, I listened to paper presentations on the benefits of exchange rate flexibility, the impact of the Columbian education reform and the role of institutions on China's unbalanced male:female ratio. After the first round of sessions we headed for lunch at Tombs. This was followed by the afternoon session, which included my own paper

presentation. Before my presentation I was the discussant for Yuou's paper on the effect of corruption perception on corporate innovation and the role of social trust. The opportunity to act as a discussant is another great opportunity which the conference provides as it helps to improve your critical analysis of other papers and provide constructive feedback. After this paper, it was my turn to present. I was nervous at first because this was the first time I presented my own Economics research to an audience outside of university but thankfully the presentation went well. The discussion following my presentation was extremely useful as I received feedback and ideas for further developments on my research from another point of view.

The afternoon session was then followed by keynote speaker presentation by Melissa Kearny. Her research gave an insight into a wide-range factors which explain the downward trend in US employment since the 2000s, such as the development robotic technology and opioid consumption. After the speaker session, we then had some free time so I walked around campus and the town with my roommate as the weather was quite nice. Saturday evening consisted of a pizza social and then an escape room which was very fun.

Sunday

On Sunday morning we all met up for brunch and a farewell reception in the hotel restaurant. There was also an award ceremony and we were each given the Carroll Round proceedings from the previous year. As the reception drew to close we all said our goodbyes and some people headed to airport. I had some more time before my flight back to London so I decided to visit the Lincoln memorial park with a couple other participants.

Once again, I would definitely recommend people to apply for the conference. Overall, I found the experience very enjoyable and insightful; there was a good balance of paper presentations, keynote speaker sessions and socials. Not only do you get to develop your own economic research skills, but you also meet many participants from across the world.

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