

The Department of Economics Seminar Series presents:

Employment Discrimination against Indigenous Peoples in the United States: Evidence from a Field Experiment

Dr. Patrick Button
Tulane University, New Orleans

Thursday, March 29, 2018

2:30 – 4:00 p.m.

Education Building 314

We conducted a resume experiment to measure the discrimination in job hiring faced by Indigenous Peoples in the United States (Native Americans, Alaska Natives, and Native Hawaiians). We created realistic resumes of men and women of about age 30 applying for common entry-level jobs (retail sales, kitchen staff, server, janitor, and security) in 11 cities. We sent employers resumes that either signaled that the applicant was Indigenous or white, with all other resume features the same on average. We compared interview response rates by race to measure hiring discrimination. We further signaled that some of the Native American applicants grew up on an Indian reservation to determine if this increases discrimination. Our results do not show differential treatment. These results are robust to several specifications, in different subsamples (e.g., by city, occupation, gender, signal type) and robustness checks. These preliminary results suggest that the substantial economic disadvantages faced by Indigenous Peoples are attributable to factors other than discrimination, such as education and the negative legacy of colonialism.



Patrick Button is an alumnus of the University of Regina, having received a B.A. Honours in Economics in 2008. Patrick completed his Ph.D. in Economics at the University of California, Irvine in 2015 and is now an Assistant Professor of Economics at Tulane University in New Orleans. His primary area of research is the economics of discrimination, particularly employment discrimination against seniors, individuals with disabilities, and Indigenous Peoples.

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