

MELISSA A. THOMASSON

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APPOINTMENTS

- Associate Dean for Faculty Excellence, July 2021-present.
- Chair, Department of Economics, Miami University, 2019-2021.
- Julian Lange Professor of Economics, Miami University, 2015-present.
- Associate Professor of Economics, Miami University, 2005-2015
- Assistant Professor of Economics, Miami University: 1998-2005
- Research Associate, National Bureau of Economic Research: 2005-present
- Faculty Research Fellow, National Bureau of Economic Research: 1999-2005

EDUCATION

University of Arizona, 1992-1998

Ph.D. in Economics, August 1998.

M.A. in Economics, December 1993.

Dissertation: *From Sickness to Health: The Twentieth-Century Development of the Demand for Health Insurance*. Advisor: Price V. Fishback.

Fields of Specialization: Applied Microeconomics, Health Economics, Economic History

University of Puget Sound, 1988-1992

B.S. in Economics, minors in Mathematics and English Literature, May 1992

Awards: Phi Beta Kappa, Magna Cum Laude, Phi Kappa Phi.

WORKING PAPERS

“The Gift of a Lifetime: The Hospital, Modern Medicine, and Mortality” (with Alex Hollingsworth, Krzysztof Karbownik, and Anthony Wray). NBER Working Paper #30663, November 2022. Conditionally accepted (December 2023) at *American Economic Review*.

- Featured by IZA (Institute of Labor Economics) under their Opinions section:
<https://wol.iza.org/opinions/gift-of-a-lifetime-hospital-modern-medicine-and-mortality>

“Do Pandemics Change Healthcare? Evidence from the Great Influenza” (with Rui Pedro Esteves, Kris James Mitchener, and Peter Nencka). NBER Working Paper # 30643, November 2022.

- Press coverage: Jena, Bapu. “How Do Pandemics Change Health Care?” Freakonomics, M.D. podcast Episode 65, December 15, 2022.

“Shut Down and Shut Out: Women Physicians in the Era of Medical Education Reform” (with Carolyn M. Moehling and Gregory T. Niemesh).

PUBLICATIONS

“School Closures During the 1918 Flu Pandemic.” (with Philipp Ager, Katherine Ericksson, Ezra Karger, and Peter Nencka). *Review of Economics and Statistics* (forthcoming).

- Previous version: NBER Working Paper #28246, December 2020, doi 10.3386/w28246.

“Can pandemics affect educational attainment? Evidence from the polio epidemic of 1916” (with Keith Meyers). *Cliometrica*, 15(2): 231-265, 2021.

- Lead article.
- Press coverage by Kamanetz, Anya. "How to Reopen Closed Schools Amid Coronavirus." National Public Radio, All Things Considered, April 24, 2020.
- Previous version: NBER Working Paper #23890, “Panics, Quarantines, and School Closures: Did the 1916 Poliomyelitis Epidemic Affect Educational Attainment?

“Votes For Women: An Economic Perspective on Women’s Enfranchisement” (with Carolyn M. Moehling). *Journal of Economic Perspectives*, 34(2), 2020, 3-23. (Formerly NBER Working Paper #26781, February 2020).

“Medical Education Reforms and the Origins of the Rural Physician Shortage” (with Carolyn M. Moehling, Gregory T. Niemesh and Jaret Treber). *Cliometrica*, 14, 2020, 181-225.

- Press coverage and media interview by Hyacinth Empinado, “[Treating Rural America: The last doctor in town.](#)” STAT, September 25, 2023.

“[Why Do Employers Provide Health Care in the First Place?](#)” *Harvard Business Review*, March 15, 2019.

“Improvements in Health and the Organization and Development of Health Care and Health Insurance Markets.” With Gregory T. Niemesh. In C. Diebolt and M. Hauptert (Eds.), *Handbook of Cliometrics*. Springer, 2019.

“Health Policy in U.S. Economic History.” In L. Cain, P. Fishback and P. Rhode (Eds.), *Oxford Handbook of American Economic History*. Oxford University Press, 2018.

“Revising Infant Mortality Rates for the Early 20th Century United States” (with Katherine Ericksson and Gregory T. Niemesh). *Demography*, 55(6), December 2018, 2001-2024.

- Lead article.
- Previously NBER Working Paper #w23263, 2017.

“Hard Times in the Land of Plenty: The Effect of Childhood During the Great Depression on Adult Outcomes” (with Price V. Fishback). *Explorations in Economic History*, 54(1), October 2014, 64-78.

“Saving Babies: The Impact of Public Health Education Programs on Infant Mortality.” (with Carolyn Moehling). *Demography*, 51(2), April 2014, 367-386.

“The Economic History of the Healthcare Industry.” In R. Whaples and R.E. Parker (Eds.), *Routledge Handbook of Modern Economic History*. London and New York: Routledge, 2013.

“The Political Economy of Saving Mothers and Babies: The Politics of State Participation in the Sheppard-Towner Program” (with Carolyn Moehling). *Journal of Economic History*, 72(1), March 2012, 75-103.

“The Trials of Job: The Impact of Climate and Weather on Infant and Non-Infant Death Rates During the Great Depression,” with Price F. Fishback, Werner Troesken, Trevor Kollman, Michael Haines, and Paul W. Rhode. In *The Economics of Climate Change: Adaptations Past and Present*, edited by Gary D. Libecap and Richard H. Steckel, The University of Chicago Press, 2011.

“From Home to Hospital: The Evolution of Childbirth in the United States, 1928-1940” (with Jaret Treber). *Explorations in Economic History*, 45(1), January 2008, 76-99.

“The Millennial Edition of the Historical Statistics of the United States, chapter on Statistics on Social Welfare,” co-editor (with Price Fishback). Cambridge University Press, 2006.

“Racial Differences in Health Insurance Coverage and Medical Expenditures: An Historical Perspective.” *Social Science History* 30(4), Winter 2006.

Early Evidence of an Adverse Selection Death Spiral? *Explorations in Economic History*, 41(4), October 2004, 313-328.

- Lead article.
- Winner of best prize for article published in *Explorations in Economic History*, 2004.

“The Declining Contribution of Socioeconomic Disparities to the Racial Gap in Infant Mortality Rates” (with William J. Collins). *Southern Economic Journal*, 70(4), April 2004, 746-776.

“The Importance of Group Coverage: How Tax Policy Shaped U.S. Health Insurance.” *American Economic Review*, 93(4), September 2003, 1373-84.

“Health Insurance in the United States.” Article for EH.Net. March 2003.

“From Sickness to Health: The Twentieth Century Development of U.S. Health Insurance.” *Explorations in Economic History*, 39(3), July 2002, 233-53.

- Lead article.

WORK IN PROGRESS

Did Changes in Medical Education Contribute to the Mortality Transition? The Case of Diphtheria (with Carolyn M. Moehling and Gregory T. Niemesh).

Medical History: What the Past Says about Health Care Reform and the Future of U.S. Health Insurance. Under contract, University of Chicago Press.

AWARDS

Bronze Telly Award for contribution to Miami's online DEI course, 2022
Prodesse Quam Conspici Award for service to Miami University, 2021
Richard K. Smucker Outstanding Professor Award, Farmer School of Business, 2019
Farmer School of Business Junior Research Excellence Award, 2006
Best paper award, *Explorations in Economic History*, 2005
EH.Net Featured Economic Historian, Fall 2004
National Bureau of Economic Research National Fellow, 2002-2003.
1999 Finalist for Allen Nevins Prize for best dissertation in economic history
John M. Olin Fellowship, 1997
University of Arizona Award for Outstanding Teaching, 1997
University of Arizona nominee for national Irwin Fellowship, 1996
Elmer J. Brown Fellowship for outstanding third-year graduate student paper in economics, 1995 (co-recipient)

GRANTS

Miami University Committee for Faculty Research and Farmer School of Business, 2014. Summer Research Grant.
Center for Business Excellence, 2013. Curriculum Development Grant.
Farmer School of Business, 2006. Summer research grant for "The Effect of the Great Depression on Long Term Health and Economic Outcomes."
National Science Foundation, 2001: "The Evolution of Hospitals in the Twentieth Century and their Impact on Public Health." Funded for \$136,957.
National Science Foundation, 1996: Doctoral Dissertation Improvement Grant No. SBR-9632121: "Examining the Impact of the Government Tax Subsidy on the Development of the Demand for Health Insurance." Funded for \$12,150.
University of Arizona Graduate Research Fund, 1995: Competitive grant awarded for the purposes of doctoral dissertation research. Funded for \$900.

BOOK REVIEWS

Horan, Caley. *Insurance Era: Risk, Governance, and the Privatization of Security in Postwar America*. EH.net, December 2022.
Chapin, Christy Ford. *Ensuring America's Health: The Public Creation of the Corporate Health Care System*. EH.net, May 2017.
Klein, Jennifer. *For All These Rights: Business, Labor, and the Shaping of America's Public-Private Welfare State*. EH.Net, August 2004.
Hoffman, Beatrix. *The Wages of Sickness: The Politics of Health Insurance in Progressive America*. EH.Net, July 2001.
Emery, George and J.C. Herbert Emery. *A Young Man's Benefit*. *Canadian Journal of Economic History*, 2001.
Kwolek-Folland, Angel. Incorporating Women. *Journal of Economic History*, June, 2000.

- Mettler, Suzanne. *Gender and Federalism in New Deal Public Policy*. *Journal of Economic History*, September, 1999.
- Sellers, Christopher C. *Hazards of the Job: From Industrial Disease to Environmental Health Science*. *Journal of Economic History*, March 1998.
- Clark, Claudia. *Radium Girls: Women and Industrial Health Reform, 1910-1935*. *Journal of Economic History*, September 1998.

TEACHING-RELATED PUBLICATIONS

Study Guide to Accompany Principles of Macroeconomics. St. Paul: West Publishing Co., 1995.

PAPER PRESENTATIONS

- 2022: Southern Economic Association Meetings
- 2019: New York University; Indiana University PIEP; Chapman University; National Bureau of Economic Research Summer Institute
- 2018: World Economic History Conference, Boston, MA
- 2017: University of Wisconsin, La Crosse; World Cliometric Congress; National Bureau of Economic Research Summer Institute; Southern Economic Association
- 2015: Oberlin College
- 2014: University of Maryland-Baltimore County; The American University
- 2013: University of Toronto; World Cliometric Society Meetings; National Bureau of Economic Research Summer Institute
- 2012: University of Colorado; Lafayette College
- 2011: Cliometric Society Meetings; University of Chicago; University of Puget Sound; Chapman University; University of Michigan Robert Wood Johnson Scholars in Health Policy Research Program
- 2010: Allied Social Science Association Meetings, Wittenberg University
- 2009: National Bureau of Economic Research Cohort Studies Program Meeting; University of California-Merced; National Bureau of Economic Research Meeting on Climate Change: Past and Present; National Bureau of Economic Research Summer Institute; Economic History Association Meetings; University of Michigan; Carnegie-Mellon University
- 2008: Brown University; Economic History Association Meetings
- 2006: Indiana University-Purdue University Indianapolis
- 2005: University of Michigan; Lehigh University; National Bureau of Economic Research Summer Institute; Allied Social Science Association Meetings
- 2004: National Bureau of Economic Research Summer Institute; Indiana University; Allied Social Science Association Meetings
- 2003: Harvard University; Florida State University; All-Ohio Economic History Seminar.
- 2002: University of Cincinnati; Allied Social Science Association Meetings; Social Science History Association Meetings
- 2001: Yale University; Social Science History Association Meetings; National Bureau of Economic Research Summer Institute
- 2000: Rutgers University; Federal Trade Commission, Fourth World Congress of the Cliometrics Society
- 1999: Indiana University; Southern Economic Association Meetings; North Carolina State University

1997: Northwestern University; National Bureau of Economic Research Summer Institute; All-UC Conference in Economic History; Cliometrics Conference; Western Economic Association Meetings

PRESS CITATIONS OF RESEARCH/OP-ED

Gorenstein, Dan. “How did we end up with health insurance being tied to our jobs?” Marketplace, June 28, 2017. (<https://www.marketplace.org/2017/06/28/health-care/how-did-we-end-health-insurance-being-tied-our-jobs>).

Gordon, Elana. “Pre-Existing Condition Conundrum.” WHYY (The Pulse), March 30, 2017. (http://www.newsworks.org/index.php/homepage-feature/item/102247-the-pre-existing-condition-conundrum-before-and-after-the-aca?linktype=hp_impact).

Michaels, Allison. “Can President Trump come through on his health care promises?” *Washington Post* podcast, “Can He Do That?” March 24, 2017.

Foroohar, Rana. “Employers can help fix American healthcare.” *Financial Times*, March 19, 2017.

“A lesson from history: Repealing the ACA will make health insurance more expensive.” Op-ed for STAT, February 13, 2017. <https://www.statnews.com/2017/02/13/health-insurance-aca-cost/>

StraightTalk MD podcast, Episode 34, Presidential Election Primer: <http://straighttalkmd.com/podcast/presidential-election-primer/>

Bartlett, Bruce. “The Question of Taxing Employer-Provided Health Insurance.” *The New York Times*, July 30, 2013.

Featured on *This American Life*, Chicago Public Radio, “Someone Else’s Money,” October 16, 2009.

All Things Considered, National Public Radio, “Accidents of History Created U.S. Health System,” by Alex Blumberg and Adam Davidson. October 22, 2009.

Doug Fabrizio of RadioWest, public radio at the University of Utah. October 26, 2009.

CONGRESSIONAL TESTIMONY

Senate Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs Committee, September 6, 2017.

PROFESSIONAL SERVICE

Editorial Board member, *Cliometrica*, 2019-present.

Board member, Community Health Alliance, 2019-present.

Executive Director, Cliometric Society, 2017-present.

Editorial Board member, *Essays in Business and Economic History*, 2017-present.

Board Member, Bethesda, Inc., 2016-present.

Board of Trustees (elected), Cliometric Society, 2008-2012.

Editorial Board member, *Explorations in Economic History*, 2006- 2014.

Editorial Board member, *Journal of Economic History*, 2010-2014.

REFeree

American Economic Journal: Applied Economics; Economic Inquiry; Bulletin of the History of Medicine; Cliometrica; Demography; Economic Journal; Explorations in Economic History; Essays in Business and Economic History; European Review of Economic History; Historical Methods; Independent Review; Journal of Economic History; Journal of the European Economic Association; Journal of Political Economy; Journal of Population Economics; MIT Press; National Science Foundation; Quarterly Journal of Economics; Robert Wood Johnson Foundation; Southern Economic Journal; University of Chicago Press.

PROFESSIONAL AFFILIATIONS

American Economic Association, Economic History Association, Cliometric Society.