

JEAN-DENIS GARON

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Contact Information

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Personal Details

CITIZENSHIP: Canadian.

LANGUAGES: English, French (mother tongue), Spanish (working knowledge).

Education

- 2007 – QUEEN'S UNIVERSITY
Ph.D. Candidate in Economics.
Thesis Title: "Public Policies and Commitment Problems: Three Essays"
Expected Completion: June 2012
Committee: Robin W. Boadway (main advisor), Sumon Majumdar and Marie-Louise Viero.
- 2006 UNIVERSITÉ DU QUÉBEC À MONTRÉAL
Master of Science in Economics, October 2006.
- 2005 UNIVERSITÉ DU QUÉBEC À MONTRÉAL
Bachelor of Science in Economics, June 2005.

Complementary Education

- 2009 UNIVERSITAT DE BARCELONA
Summer School in Political Economy, July 2009
Instructors: James Snyder (Harvard/MIT), Ben Lockwood (Warwick).

Fields of Specialization

Public finance (including Fiscal federalism and Behavioral economics), Microeconomics, Law and Economics.

Academic works

Research articles in preparation:

2011. "Can Centralization Stabilize Federations? A Dynamic Reassessment of the Centralization Problem" [Job market paper].

2010. "Temptation, Self-Control and the Redistributive Role of Public Pensions". [To be posted soon]

Work in progress:

"Commitment for Whom? Pensions, Self-Control and the Soft-Budget Constraint" (with Marie-Louise Viero)

"Optimal Redistributive Pensions when Agents Learn Self-Control".

Policy papers:

Boadway, R.W. and J-D. Garon (2011). "[The Design of Employment Insurance in a Federation](#)," The Mowatt Centre for Policy Innovation, School of Public Policy and Governance, University of Toronto.

Garon, J-D. (2006). "Retrait des Subventions aux Écoles Primaires et Secondaires Privées: Évaluation de l'élasticité de la Demande," Discussion paper no. 57, Centrale des Syndicats du Québec.

Books:

Garon, J-D. and A. Therrien (2007). *Le Prédateur et l'Imposteur: La Politique Économique selon Jean Chrétien et Paul Martin*, Michel Brûlé Éditeur, 260 p.

Garon, J-D. and N. Marceau. *Relations Financières Québec-Ottawa: État des Lieux et Perspectives*, In Progress (manuscript available upon request).

Scholarships, Awards, and Honours

Major:

2011-12 Ontario Graduate Scholarship (\$ 15 000).

2010-11 Ontario Graduate Scholarship (\$ 15 000).

2007-10 Doctoral scholarship, Fonds Québécois de la Recherche sur la Société et la Culture (\$ 60 000).

2007-12 Various scholarships (declined) including Senator Franck Carrell fellowship awarded to the best entering student originating from the East of Ontario, Queen's Economics Department (approx. \$ 70 000).

2005-06 Graduate Scholarship in Economics, Finance and Fiscal Studies - Ministère des Finances du Québec (3 awarded in Quebec, \$ 15 000).

2003-05 Fairfax Financial Holdings Limited scholarship (1 nominate per university, 9 granted in Canada, \$ 10 000).

Minor:

2009	Student Conference Presentation Award, School of Graduate Studies and Research, Queen's University.
2009	Travel fellowship, Institut d'Economia de Barcelona (IEB), Universitat de Barcelona.
2008	Special Summer Assistantship, Economics Department, Queen's University.
2006	Research Fellowship, Centrale des Syndicats du Québec.
2005	Bourse d'Initiation à la Recherche Hydro-Québec/ESG-UQAM.

Presentations in Conferences

Presenter:

2010	Annual Meeting of the Canadian Law and Economics Association, University of Toronto.
2010	Annual Meeting of the Canadian Public Economics Group (CPEG), Queen's University.
2009	IEB Summer School in Political Economy, Universitat de Barcelona (IEB).

Discussant:

2010	"Fuzzy Political Campaigns" by Arianna Degan (UQAM) and Ming Li (Concordia), Annual Meetings of the Canadian Public Economics Group, Laval University.
2010	"On the Selection of Property Crimes with Private Protection" by Steeve Mongrain (Simon Fraser) and Tanguy van Ypersele (GREQAM-Marseille), Annual Meetings of the Canadian Economics Association, Laval University.
2010	"Self-Containment: Achieving Peace in Anarchic Settings" by Petros Sekeris (Namur), Annual Defense and Security Workshop, Royal Military College of Canada, Kingston.

Others:

2007	"On the Nexus of Politics and Economics," Invited Speaker for the Honors Commerce Speech, Marianopolis College, Westmount QC.
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Relevant Employment

2007-10	TEACHING FELLOW, QUEEN'S UNIVERSITY <i>Instructor for Econ 111s (Introductory Microeconomics) for the semesters of Summer 2009, Winter 2010, Summer 2010, Winter 2011, Summer 2011</i> <i>Instructor for Econ 112s (Introductory Macroeconomics) for the semester of Fall 2009.</i>
2009-11	TEACHING ASSISTANT, QUEEN'S UNIVERSITY <i>Microeconomic Theory (M.A.), Fall 2010</i> <i>Advanced Microeconomic Theory II (Ph.D), Winter 2009</i> <i>Advanced Microeconomic Theory I (Ph.D), Fall 2008</i> <i>Public Finance Theory (B.A. Hons), Winter 2008</i> <i>Law and Economics (B.A. Hons), Fall 2007.</i>

- 2009-12 RESEARCH ASSISTANT, QUEEN'S UNIVERSITY
Professor Sumon Majumdar, Winter 2012 (contract granted)
Professor Robin W. Boadway, Fall 2011
Professor Robin W. Boadway, Summer 2010
Professor Robin W. Boadway, Summer 2009.
- 2008-09 OFFICE OF THE OFF. OPPOSITION CRITIC FOR LABOUR, NATIONAL ASSEMBLY OF QUEBEC
Economic Advisor to M. Francois Rebello, Critic of the Official Opposition for the Minister of Labour,
December 2008 to May 2009.
- 2007 MINISTÈRE DES FINANCES DU QUÉBEC
Intern, 'Direction de la Politiques Budgétaire', Summer 2007
Conducted the preparatory work for the "Groupe de Travail sur la Tarification des Services Publics"
(Montmarquette committee), Summer 2007.
- 2007 CÉGEP ANDRÉ-LAURENDEAU, MONTREAL QC
Full time teacher in Economics, Département des Sciences Humaines, Winter 2007
Courses taught: Actualité économique internationale (2 groups), Agents microéconomiques (1 group).
- 2006 TEACHING ASSISTANT, UNIVERSITÉ DU QUÉBEC À MONTRÉAL
Mathematical Economics I, Winter 2006.
- 2004-06 RESEARCH ASSISTANT, UNIVERSITÉ DU QUÉBEC À MONTRÉAL
Professor Nicolas Marceau, Fall 2006
Professor Alain Guay, Summer 2006
Professor Nicolas Marceau, May 2004 to April 2005.

References

ROBIN BOADWAY, OC, FRSC
 David C. Smith Chair in
 Economic Theory
 Department of Economics
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 Economics
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Service

- 2011 Referee for the Canadian Journal of Economics.
- 2010-12 Co-organizer, Queen's Economics Intramural Ice Hockey Team.
- 2010-11 Organizer, Public Economics Reading Group, Queen's Economics Department.
- 2009-10 Co-organizer, Public Economics Reading Group, Queen's Economics Department.
- 2007-10 Tutor for Undergraduate Students, Queen's Economics Department.
- 2003-04 Secretary-Treasurer, Association des Étudiants en Sciences Économiques, UQAM.

Professional Affiliations

Current American Economic Association (since 2004).
Current Canadian Economic Association (since 2004).
2004 Economic History Society.

Dissertation abstracts

Can Centralization Stabilize Federations? A Dynamic Reconsideration of the Centralization Problem

In this paper, we consider the costs and benefits of centralization in a federation. In our model, centralization affects the probability of survival of the union. For environments in which the members of the federation can or cannot commit not to unilaterally secede in future periods, we show that the level of centralization of the public sector endogenously modifies the probability of dissolution of the federation. In our dynamic analysis, we put to the test the intuition that centralization may improve the political stability of the federation, as seceding from a centralized federation may be costlier, as it would require the newborn country to massively re-invest in its own institutions. We show that this is the case only if the immediate secession costs associated to a centralized public sector outweigh the long-term welfare costs it also generates under a united federation. We derive optimal centralization rules under both full and no-commitment, namely when the constitution is either a complete or an incomplete contract. In the latter case, centralization can either be used as a commitment device to avoid inefficient unilateral secessions, or as a way to reduce the transaction costs associated to the negotiation of future constitutional amendments.

Temptation, Self-Control and the Redistributive Role of Public Pensions

I derive an optimal linear public pension scheme in an economy inhabited by households with self-control preferences. The role of the social planner is to decide the rate of a payroll tax, and the extent to which the pension system redistributes from low-income to high-income households. I analyze the optimal pension plan when the normative treatment of self-control problem differs. Optimal pensions are first derived when individuals are aware of their self-control problems, a behaviour which is modelled after the axioms of Gul and Pesendorfer (2001,2004). The optimal policies are then derived in a framework where the social planner paternalistically maximizes the long-run utility of households whose short-term utility exhibits a present bias. In both cases, simple optimal tax formulas are derived and the optimal pension schemes are compared using numerical simulations. My results show that with self-control preferences the optimal tax rate is generally higher than when the social planner tries to correct a present bias. The pension system also tends to be less redistributive in the version of the model where households can exert self-control when subject to temptation.

Commitment for Whom? Pensions, Self-Control and the Soft-Budget Constraint

[Joint with my co-supervisor Marie-Louise Viero]

A growing body of evidence in behavioral economics is showing that economic agents may not be able to exert enough self-control when they are subject to temptation. This has been shown both in the case of visceral temptation, but also in the making of long-term decisions, such as the determination of saving plans over the life-cycle. So far, normative analysis has shown that when such lack of self-control is the source of preference-reversals, which leads individual to regret their past decisions, then it is optimal for a benevolent government to intervene and to provide these individuals with forced commitment. In this paper, we show that when governments are not benevolent and have to be reelected, it may also be optimal to force households to save because governments are aware that it will be impossible for them, in the future, not to bail-out the households whose old-age savings are low. The public pension plan therefore serves as a commitment device for the government itself, and may act so as to reduce the adverse effects of time-inconsistent policies. In our model, the democratic process generates a soft budget constraint for the individuals who can exert self-control: without a public pension plan, their behaviour would mimic that of the myopic individual, as they would expect to be bailed out in the future.