

The Hong Kong Polytechnic University
Department of Logistics and Maritime Studies
Research Seminar

When safety messages make us less safe: Evidence from traffic fatality message

by

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Date: 4 November 2019 (Monday)
Time: 10:30am - 11:30am
Venue: M802, Li Ka Shing Tower
The Hong Kong Polytechnic University

(Conducted in English)

Abstract:

We provide evidence that displaying roadside fatality counts on highway dynamic message signs (DMSs) result in significant increases in traffic accidents over the 10 kilometers after the DMS. We exploit detailed data on DMS and accident location, DMS log files, and a unique setting in Texas where fatality messages are instructed to occur only during one week each month. We further find that the association between fatality messages and subsequent accidents is increasing in the reported fatality count, suggesting that drivers become nervous and drive less safely when presented with shocking statistics.

Bio:

Jonathan Hall is an applied microeconomist at the University of Toronto, with appointments in the Department of Economics and Munk School of Global Affairs and Public Policy. He is affiliated with the University of Toronto Transportation Research Institute, School of Cities, and Urban Policy Lab. His research focuses on urban transportation, and his recent work has addressed how to design road tolls and the effects of new transportation technologies. His work has been published in the *Journal of Public Economics*, *Journal of Urban Economics*, and *Transportation Research Part B*. His dissertation was honored with the Best Dissertation Award by the Transportation and Public Utilities Group and the Best Paper Award at the Kumho-Nectar Conference on Transportation Economics. Professor Hall received his B.A. from Brigham Young University and his M.A. and Ph.D. from the University of Chicago. Before coming to the University of Toronto, he completed a postdoctoral fellowship at Northwestern University.

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All are welcome!