VANDERBILT UNIVERSITY
DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMICS

Maren Young
maren.j.young@vanderbilt.edu
maren-young.com

BUSINESS ADDRESS:
Department of Economics
212-A Calhoun Hall
Nashville, TN 37240

CURRENT APPOINTMENT

Senior Lecturer in Economics, August 2026 - present
Department of Economics, Vanderbilt University

PAST APPOINTMENTS

Postdoctoral Fellow, August 2025 - August 2026
Department of Economics, Macalester College

EDUCATION	**DEGREE**	**DATE**	**FIELD**
University of California, Berkeley	Ph.D.	2025	Economics
Clemson University	B.S.	2017	Economics (*summa cum laude*)

DISSERTATION TITLE: "Essays in Behavioral and Development Economics"

Principal Advisor: Professor Stefano DellaVigna
Other References: Professors Edward Miguel and Supreet Kaur

RESEARCH AND TEACHING FIELDS:

PRIMARY
- Behavioral Economics
- Development Economics
- Applied Microeconomics

SECONDARY
- Spatial Economics
- Economics of Gender

PAPERS:

"Is Social Desirability Biasing Survey Responses? Assessing Interviewer Effects in Survey Data" **(Job Market Paper)**

Social norms play a role in important decisions such as educational and labor supply choices. Could social norms also systematically affect the responses to sensitive questions in surveys? I examine the role of gender norms in two ongoing surveys: the National Longitudinal Survey of Youth 1979 (NLSY79) and the Kenya Life Panel Survey (KLPS). I examine how responses to sensitive topics—such as gender norms and household labor division—vary depending on the gender of the interviewer, which likely affects the perceived norm in the eye of the interviewee. In the NLSY I focus on questions measuring agreement or disagreement with statements such as "Men should share the work around the house with women". I first document a systematic difference in responses between male and female respondents. Consistent with the role of social norms, when the interviewer is of the opposite gender, these differences shrink by about 30-50%. For example, female respondents are less likely to give the gender-typical response when interviewed by males, and the same pattern holds for males interviewed by females. I examine parallel patterns in the KLPS, focusing on comparable questions about gender norms. I replicate the key finding that females are less likely to give the gender-typical answer when interviewed by a male, compared to by a female — and conversely for male respondents. I also find the gender-based response patterns in the KLPS do not fit the simplest social desirability model. I conclude the paper by showing the implications of these findings for the elicitation of attitudes and survey responses on sensitive topics.

"Internet Matching Technologies and the Geographic Distribution of Chess Skills" **(Working Paper)**

With Sara Ellison

There is broad consensus that the internet has the potential to become an important tool for learning. There is less consensus on its likely distributional effects. On the one hand, it could provide previously isolated regions, countries lacking high-quality educational systems, or under-resourced individuals and communities access to skills and knowledge. On the other hand, its offerings might be relatively more accessible to well-resourced communities for many reasons, widening gaps. The COVID pandemic has put these questions into sharp relief, with millions worldwide being moved to online or distance-learning. This paper leverages a historic example of distance-acquisition of one particular skill, chess-playing. We look for evidence of either this democratizing effect or a widening divide on chess skills from internet penetration. We also look broadly at how the geographic distribution of chess skills has changed since the

introduction of the internet. Finally, we speculate on what, if anything, can be said about the relevant mechanism given the particular characteristics of how one typically learns to play chess.

RESEARCH EXPERIENCE:

RESEARCH:

Research Assistant (with Ted Miguel), Department of Economics, U.C. Berkeley (2020)
Research Assistant (with Sara Ellison), MIT Economics Department (2017-2019).
Research Intern, Economic Mobility Pathways (EMPath), Government Center, Boston, MA (2017).

TEACHING:

Instructor of Record, Department of Economics, Vanderbilt University (2026-present)
Economic Statistics
Instructor of Record, Department of Economics, Macalester College (2025)
Behavioral Economics
Principles of Economics
Teaching Assistant, Department of Economics, U.C. Berkeley (2020-2024)
Intermediate Microeconomic Analysis
Econometrics
Introduction to Economics
Graduate Student Tutor, Department of Economics, U.C. Berkeley (2019-2020)
Intermediate Microeconomic Analysis
Academic Research Mentor and Advisor for undergraduate students, Scholar Launch Program (2021-2023)

FELLOWSHIPS AND AWARDS:

2021–2022	Outstanding Graduate Student Instructor Award
2019–2021	Gilbert Center Fellowship
2017	Marian L. Harris Award for Excellence in Economics

OTHER INFORMATION:

Languages:	English (native), Spanish (advanced)
Citizenship:	United States