

Will We Ever “Go Back” to Our Pre-COVID-19 Lifestyle?

Not Completely, Initial Survey Results Suggest

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About the Speaker

Deborah Salon is an Assistant Professor of Transportation in the School of Geographical Sciences and Urban Planning at Arizona State University and Associate Director of the TOMNET University Transportation Center. Salon studies transportation in cities with the goal of better understanding of how these systems work, and how policies and smart investments might improve them. The methods she uses range from qualitative, interview-based research to advanced econometric analysis. Dr. Salon holds a PhD in Agricultural and Resource Economics from the University of California, Davis. Before joining the faculty at ASU, she completed a post-doctoral fellowship at Columbia University's Earth Institute and subsequently held a research appointment at UC Davis's Institute of Transportation Studies.

About the Talk

Virtually overnight, a large fraction of U.S. households has transitioned from a reality of long commutes to telecommuting, from in-person to online classes and business meetings, and from in-store to online shopping – even for groceries. Many of these changes were happening already, but COVID-19 has pressed the fast-forward button. After the threat of contagion is gone, to what extent will American society “go back” to our pre-COVID-19 way of life? Knowing the answer to this question is critical for making good business and policy decisions, and in recent weeks, a variety of thought leaders have written predictions of the future.

We are conducting a national survey with the goal of using real data to begin to understand what the future may hold. Old habits die hard, as they say, but the disruption of COVID-19 is different from other shocks. Importantly, there are some aspects to our disrupted lives that we may actually want to “keep” because we’ve been introduced to new technologies and ways of interacting that are quite convenient, and actually save time and money. Initial survey results suggest that respondents do expect substantial changes in telecommuting, business air travel, and online shopping that will persist beyond the COVID-19 crisis.

This seminar has been converted to a webinar and is now webcast live to a worldwide audience using Zoom.

To access the live webcast please visit:

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