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Personal Information: US Citizenship

Prior Studies:

B.S., Economics, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, 2014

Doctoral Studies:

Harvard University 2016-present

Ph.D. Candidate in Economics

Thesis Title: “Essays in Labor Economics and Criminal Justice”

Expected Completion Date: May 2022

References:

Professor Lawrence Katz

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Professor Edward Glaeser

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Professor Andrei Shleifer

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Professor Desmond Ang

Harvard Kennedy School

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Teaching and Research Fields:

Primary Fields: Labor Economics, Public Economics

Secondary Fields: Crime, Human Capital

Teaching Experience:

Fall 2018-2020 “Labor Market Analysis,” Graduate Course, Harvard University, Teaching Fellow for Professor Lawrence Katz, *Distinction in Teaching Award (2018, 2019, 2020)*

Research Experience and Other Employment:

2014–2016 Research Assistant to Professor Amy Finkelstein, National Bureau of Economic Research

2011–2013 Research Assistant to Professor Jonathan Gruber, MIT Department of Economics

2010–2011 Research Assistant to Professor Rebecca Saxe, MIT Department of Brain and Cognitive Sciences

Professional Activities:

Referee	<i>Quarterly Journal of Economics; American Economic Review: Insights; Review of Economics and Statistics; Journal of Urban Economics</i>
Mentor	Harvard Economics Graduate Peer Mentor
Organizer	Public Finance and Labor Economics Lunch Seminar
Member	Graduate Student Group for Diversity & Inclusion in Economics

Honors, Scholarships, and Fellowships:

2021	J-PAL North America Work of the Future Grant, <i>with Larry Katz and Liz Engle</i>
2020	Horowitz Foundation Dissertation Prize
2020	Donald R. Cressey Award, Horowitz Foundation
2020	Certificate of Distinction in Teaching, Harvard Bok Center
2019	Certificate of Distinction in Teaching, Harvard Bok Center
2018	Fellowship, James M. and Cathleen D. Stone PhD Scholar in Inequality
2018	Certificate of Distinction in Teaching, Harvard Bok Center
2016	National Science Foundation (NSF) Graduate Research Fellowship
2014	MIT Undergraduate Economics Association Thesis Award
2013	MIT Public Service Center Fellowship

Research Papers:

“The Effectiveness and Equity of Police Stops” with Jeffrey Fagan (Job Market Paper)

Abstract: Over 3.5 million pedestrians are stopped by police in the United States every year. This paper explores the effectiveness and equity of using pedestrian stops as a crime deterrence tool. Using administrative data from New York City, we test whether pedestrian stops affect neighborhood crime and high school dropout rates and explore the equity of racial disparities in stop rates. Exploiting a 2012 reform that reduced stops by 95%, we compare neighborhoods that have similar crime rates but substantially different stop rates prior to the reform. Treated neighborhoods that experienced twice the reduction in stop rates do not display differential increases in felonies and violent misdemeanors, shootings, or killings over the five years following the reform. Analysis of police surges reveals that when increases in stops are accompanied by increases in police officers, serious crime significantly declines. But alone, heightened stop rates have no measurable impact on serious crime. Comparing students across schools that are differentially exposed to changes in stop rates, we estimate that the reform reduced the probability of high school dropout by 0.36-1.66 percentage points per academic year. By instrumenting for neighborhood stop rates with the reform, we trace out the marginal return curve of stops by race and find that Black and Hispanic residents were stopped at substantially higher rates than would be optimal for crime detection.

“Police Violence and Civic Engagement” with Desmond Ang
American Political Science Review, *Revise & Resubmit.*

Abstract: Roughly a thousand people are killed by American law enforcement officers each year, accounting for more than 5% of all homicides. We estimate the causal impact of these events on civic engagement. Exploiting hyper-local variation in how close residents live to a killing, we find that exposure to police violence leads to significant increases in registrations and votes. These effects are driven entirely by Black and Hispanic citizens and are largest for killings of unarmed individuals. We find corresponding increases in support for criminal justice reforms, suggesting that police violence may cause voters to politically mobilize against perceived injustice.

Research in Progress:

“Supporting Pathways out of Poverty: Randomized Evaluation of Mobility Mentoring” with Larry Katz and Liz Engle

Abstract: Current public support services tend to address a particular symptom of poverty rather than central causes. This paper explores whether holistic, individualized mentoring combined with monetary incentives can help low-income public housing residents achieve economic self-sufficiency. The intervention – Mobility Mentoring – includes an individualized coaching plan, weekly meetings with mentors to set goals and assess progress, and temporary financial assistance to help participants overcome financial obstacles and to incentivize goals. We evaluate the intervention through a randomized experiment. With the assistance of the Boston Housing Authority (BHA), we recruited public housing and voucher recipients who are able to work and randomly assign half to treatment. Treatment group participants may receive three years of Mobility Mentoring services, while control group participants receive the services usually available to them in the community. Drawing on administrative tax data, our primary outcomes explore the impact of the program on employment, earnings, and household income. We will also examine impacts on financial health, housing stability, public benefit receipt, and survey measures of health and well-being. We plan to follow study participants for ten years from random assignment in administrative data sources, allowing us to assess whether the intervention generates economic self-sufficiency in the long-run.

“The Effect of Low-level Arrests on the Early-life Trajectory of Urban Youth: Evidence from Administrative Tax and Arrest Records” with Benny Goldman

Abstract: We study the downstream effects of being arrested for a minor offense as a teenager on adult earnings, employment, and incarceration. Prior research tends to use judge IV designs that estimate the effects of judge decisions (e.g., bail, incarceration, etc.) on defendants who, in many cases, are already tied up in the criminal justice (CJ) system. In this paper, we focus on teenagers who are plausibly interacting with the CJ system for the first time and ask whether strict enforcement of minor offenses for teenagers generates a *criminal justice poverty trap* that prevents disadvantaged teenagers from living more productive lives. We will use the drawdown of stop and frisk policies in New York City, which prior research has shown leads to no change in serious crime but to large reductions in the number of citations and arrests for low-level offenses, as a plausibly exogenous shock to the probability a teenager is arrested for a minor offense. A second source of experimental variation will exploit maps of police surges that identify areas where the police allocated additional patrol officers. Matching teenage residents on either side of a police surge border provides a natural experiment where teenagers living in the surge zone are more likely to be arrested for minor offenses but are otherwise similar to teenagers living near (but outside) the zone. We will explore heterogeneous effects by race, sex, and predicted criminality, and will quantify the extent to which enforcement of low-level offenses mediate neighborhood rates of upward mobility.

“What Makes a Good Apple? Officer Mental Health, Risk Perceptions, and Aggressive Policing” with William Murdock III

Description: How do officer mental health and risk perceptions influence officer performance? In collaboration with a large urban police department, we have collected three waves of survey data on officer mental health and risk perceptions and have been granted access to detailed administrative data on officer assignments and performance. This paper will first document the extent to which both levels and changes in mental health and risk perceptions predict peaceful de-escalations, uses of force, and civilian complaints. We will compare these estimates to other observable officer characteristics, such as officer tenure, military training, age, gender, and race. Next, we will correlate these factors with causal estimates of officer performance by exploiting quasi-random assignment of officers to calls for service. The long-term goal of this project is to design a randomized experiment that tests interventions aimed at improving officer mental health and wellness.